SEPTEMBER

43

Polyhedron

NEWSZINE

RPGA NETWORK

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Conventions

'VILLE-CON '88, October 21-23

This gaming extravaganza will be held on the campus of Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville, MO. Special guests will include Jean Rabe, RPGA™ Network Coordinator; Rick Reid, Fluffy Quest author; and Skip Williams, Sage Advice columnist. There will be RPGA Network sanctioned AD&D® game, MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game, GAMMA WORLD® game, PARANOIA, and TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES tournaments. Other games include DC HEROES, ROLEMASTER, WARHAMMER, TALISMAN, CYBORG COMMANDO, and TOP SECRET/S.I.™ game. Also featured will be a dealers' room, several war games, and computer games. Some of the finest game masters in the Midwest will be in attendance. Cost for the weekend is $5. Low-cost housing is available, and pre-registration is encouraged. For more information contact Tim Beach, Union Office, NWMSU, Maryville MO 64468, or call 816-562-1217.

CONTACT, October 14-16

Come to Evansville, IN., for a three-day science fiction and gaming feast. Scheduled RPGA Network tournaments include AD&D® game Feature and Masters competitions, MARVEL SUPER HEROES Feature and Masters, PARANOIA, CHILL, JAMES BOND, and GAMMA WORLD® game. Other activities include a costume competition, movie room, large dealers room, and an art show and auction. The convention is sponsored by the Evansville Science Fiction Association, Inc., and will be held at the Ramada Inn. For more information or to pre-register contact the ESFA at P.O. Box 3894, Evansville, IN 47737.

SYNDICON II, October 21-23

A gaming feast will be served up at the Glen Ellyn Holiday Inn. Guest of Honor is TSR, Inc.'s Jon Pickens, who is involved with the creation of Second Edition AD&D game. RPGA Network tournaments will include an AD&D game Feature, Masters, and Extra events. Many other games will be available such as DC Heroes, BATTLETECH, ILLUMINATI, CAR WARS, and more! Fees are $9 until September 15, $12 thereafter, and $15 at the door. To pre-register or for more information write to WCSFA/SYNDICON, P.O. Box A3981, Chicago, IL 60690, or call 312-462-7954.

OCTOBER FANTASY IV, October 28-30

Enjoy a haunting weekend in Milwaukee, WI., which will feature several RPGA Network tournaments, including a three-round AD&D game Feature, two-round AD&D Masters, two-round CHILL, and a two-round TOP SECRET/S.I. game. In addition, other role-playing games, strategy board games, war games, movies, a silent used game auction, a dealers' area, and the fourth annual raw liver toss will be held. Ghost of Honor for the weekend is Harold Johnson, director of TSR, Inc.'s Consumer Services Division. Pre-registration fees are $7 a day or $12 for the weekend until October 1, $8 and $15 thereafter. RPGA Network members get a $2 discount. For more information contact Keith Polster, 1812 West Morgan Drive, Apt 6, West Bend WI 53905, or call 414-338-8498.

SILVERCON, November 18-20

An RPGA Network AD&D game tournament will be among the offerings at Silvercon in Asheville, NC. This new convention is sponsored by The Asheville Gaming Society, The Alternate Realists and other local organizations, and is a fund-raiser for the widow and estate of the late Manly Wade Wellman, author of the "Silver John" stories. For more information write to Silvercon, 664 Lakeshore Drive, Asheville NC 28804.

Classifieds

Idaho Wanted: Players and DMs for the AD&D® game and players for the MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game. Also wanted: modules M1 Blizzard Pass and M2 Riddling Minotaur. Contact Jessica Bood, 160 N 1 W, Apt. 11, Rexburg Idaho 83440, or call 208-356-8252.

California Wanted: Someone who lives in or near Ventura County to help me, a first-level player in the D&D® game, get started. Please contact me if interested by writing to Joe Gilbert, 1050 New St., Santa Paula CA 93060.

Massachusettes Attention Gamers: Interested in forming an official RPGA Network club in the Western Massachusettes area? Look no further: the Fantasy Gamer's Guild is looking for RPGA Network members to make it official. Newsletter, modules, meetings, a BBS, maybe more. Send SASE to Fantasy Gamer's Guild. C/O Costa Valhouli, 56 Hoyt Road, Bradford MA 01830.

Massachusettes Gaming Group Needed! 14-year-old AD&D game player with 4 years experience seeks a DM and other serious players to form a regular AD&D game group in the northern Worcester County area. Female players welcome. Please contact Patrick Lawlor, 30 Gatehouse Rd., Westminster MA 01473.

Pennsylvania Wanted: People to join unique (and hopefully) registered club all play by mail. We welcome anyone who is interested. Send correspondence to: Claire and William Brierton, 5241 Natrona Way, Pittsburgh PA 15201, 412-781-0905.

Pennsylvania Looking for adventure? I'm looking for a dungeon master and adventurers of first through fourth level in the Philadelphia area or somewhere near there. You must be 12 years of age or older. My main interests are the D&D game, but I am willing to learn others. Contact Sean Murphy, 7248 Brous Ave., Philadelphia PA 19149.

About the Cover

A band of heroic cowboys flees from Irish Mexican bandits while trying to protect their precious cargo of Dr. Brown's soda. Using the bottles as weapons against the villains doesn't seem to be doing much good in this scene from "Dr. Brown's Miracle Juice," this issue's featured module. Art by Valerie Valusek.

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Polyhedron™ NEWSZINE

Volume 8, Number 5
Issue #43, September, 1988

SPECIAL MODULE FEATURE

8 **Dr. Brown's Miracle Juice - by Michael Selinker**
It gets pretty hot in Missouri during the summertime, and a big sip of Dr. Brown's soda goes a long way to cool off the populace. The problem is, where's the soda? This was used as the BOOT HILL® game tournament at the 1987 GEN CON® Game Fair.

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A troubleshooter's life is not an easy one, as evident in this feature based on West End Games' Paranoia Role-Playing Game.

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Treat your players to some of these new and wonderful magic items.

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This irrascible character wanders the streets of Ravens Bluff. Be careful if he wanders into you.

25 **The New Rogues Gallery - by Stephen Wales, Dr. Edward Friedlander, and Costa Valhouli**
A potpourri of characters fill this gallery's offerings.

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If familiars are just too familiar to your players, try a few of Vince's suggestions to liven up your campaign.

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Our columnist offers a different look at multi-classed characters and proposes ways to reward heroes.

Notes From HQ

Basking in the Swamp

Whew! Time to take a nice, relaxed, deep breath. GEN CON®/ORIGINS™ Game Fair is behind us. And the RPGA™ Network was very visible at the convention with the approximately 40 events it sponsored. Thanks to all the RPGA members who assisted HQ and who ran and played in the events. A full report on the convention will appear in the next Notes From HQ column. I can't give you a report now because this column is being written several months before the convention. I had to write it early to get it through editing and typesetting and keylining and all those other steps that are necessary in the production of the Newszine. And that brings me to my next point.

Deadlines

Some RPGA members who help run conventions in their local areas have become angry and frustrated because their convention announcements have not appeared in the POLYHEDRON™ Newszine's convention listing. To get a convention listed in the Newszine you must send the information to us at least five months in advance. The announcement should include the location and dates of the convention, an address and/or phone number so people can register or get additional information, the convention's rates, and a list of some of the convention's activities. Address the announcement to the RPGA Network, and write CONVENTION ANNOUNCEMENT somewhere on the outside of the envelope. We have to get the information early because the POLYHEDRON Newszine is a bimonthly publication, and it takes about two months from the time material is selected and edited to the time a finished magazine is mailed, and as much as a month before it reaches the entire membership. In addition, HQ does not consider a convention's request for a tournament to also serve as a convention announcement. It's okay if you put the request and announcement in the same envelope, however.

The Swamp

Network HQ has been swamped with article submissions for the POLYHEDRON Newszine. There are stacks of materials sitting on a desk outside my office waiting to be read, critiqued, and selected to run in specific issues of the Newszine. We at HQ think that's wonderful because it means the members are interested in sharing their ideas with the rest of the Network and are willing to take the time to sit down and write articles. It means we no longer have to call members begging for articles on certain topics to get enough material to fill an issue. It means there is a large amount of high-quality work to choose from, and the articles are on a variety of topics and game systems which means POLYHEDRON Newszine can publish articles each issue which feature different role-playing games. For example, this issue features the BOOT HILL® game, AD&D® game, and West End's PARANOIA game. The BOOT HILL entry is this issue's module, and it is fun to read even if you don't play the game. Next issue we'll have an article featuring Chaosium's CALL OF CTHULHU game. Senior Assistant Editor Skip Williams and I read through and critique submissions regularly. We promise that every article submitted will be read and considered for publication. When we reject articles we take the time to write the author some suggestions on how the article could be improved. Just be patient with us and make sure you include a self-addressed-stamped- envelope (SASE) with your submission so we can reply. Also, try to be a little understanding. POLYHEDRON Newszines are planned about six months in advance. So when you send us a submission, and we accept it and tell you it will appear in about six or eight months, don't be surprised by the delay. And please don't get impatient waiting for a reply from us. It's not practical for us to read manuscripts as we get them. As things stand now we read articles about once a month — which is pretty good when you consider the magazine comes out every other month. This means you'll have to wait two to six weeks to hear from us once you mail your submission.

Now, just because we have a lot of articles doesn't mean that we don't want more. We're not going to let the membership off that easy. We could still use more Living City entries and New Rogues Gallery submissions that feature characters from a variety of systems or that include character statistics for more than one game system. We like to have a lot to pick from when designing the Newszines. And we've grown so terribly fond of the swamp that we wouldn't even want to consider living in any other environment.

More Members

Only a few more months remain in the Network's membership drive. The prizes and conditions of the drive were announced in last issue. If you're a new member and do not have the membership drive specifics, contact HQ.

Thanks

Thanks this month go to Jay Tummelson, who found time between writing a couple of tournaments to edit TOP SECRET/S.I.™ game tournaments, and to Janice Ours who volunteered several days work to help HQ by typing in tournaments for GEN CON/ORIGINS Game Fair. Thanks must also go to Skip Williams for spending many hours helping me read through POLYHEDRON Newszine submissions, to member Vince Garcia for inundating us with submissions, and to TSR, Inc.'s Debbie Poutsch for finding time to type many of the submissions into our computer system. We appreciate their efforts.

Branching Out

The Network has begun to make a concerted effort to expand its tournament horizons beyond the confines of the United States. This past summer a large RPGA Network AD&D® game tournament was held in Oslo, Norway, at a convention sponsored by AEH Hobby. Because of the increasing number of RPGA Network members from other countries we are hopeful the number of international tournaments will grow.

Take Care,

Jean ❑

Letters

Belaboring the Point

I could not let the Notes from HQ in issue #41 go by without a few comments. The idea that the formula for tournament points and for service points should not be released to the membership sounds very "godlike" to me. In many articles in the POLYHEDRON™ Newszine in the past the idea that this is "our" Network has been mentioned more than once. Now you're trying to tell us we cannot be trusted with our own point system — come on now! Don't blame everyone for what some members have done. No matter what the system, people both inside and outside of it are capable of trying to manipulate it. Let's face it that's the dark side of human nature, but secrecy is not the answer. Just look at politics.

I would assume that as more members reach higher levels, the levels for Masters and Grandmasters also will be increased. This being the probable case, HQ's way of saying thank you should not be able to manipulate the points system. As far as the service medals go — no problem — that should be a HQ decision. I totally agree that members should be given a greater benefit for their efforts. It's a long time overdue. But HQ should not be free to decide how much service points are worth on an individual basis. Whether real or imaginary the idea of favoritism comes into the picture. Service points should be standardized for like services and published for all members so they can see how helping the Network will help their point level. There are far too many secrets in the world and more are not needed for the RPGA Network.

So, please, please try to keep everything as above board as possible.

The statement that under the old system, a person who just showed up to play received almost as many points as the winner illustrates the problem with the player rating system. How well did the person really play? I've played in games where I really did not know who to vote for because everyone played so bad. In either case, I still had to vote for the four best. I would like to see the Network change the player rating system to be more like the judges rating system. let the players rate each other (not themselves) on a scale of 1 to 5 based on certain attributes just like we do for judges with the DM also voting and breaking all ties. Let the players reward excellence at their own table.

Also, I don't like the idea that there is a big difference between playing, placing, and winning. Most role-playing games are a team effort that the rating system forces into an individual effort. The fit is not always possible and in the long run, I feel the game will suffer. It's bad enough that you may have played well and not advanced or placed but to take a points beating also is a bit much.

I realize this letter sounds like I do not like or trust anyone at HQ, but nothing is farther from the truth. I have met a few of the staff members and I have nothing but the greatest respect and adoration for them. They have devoted countless hours trying to make the Network the best it could possibly be and I'm sorry that it sounds like I'm knocking them for it. But I totally and completely do not like or trust secrecy, and even the potential for favoritism is wrong for the RPGA Network. The points system should let members compare themselves and set goals to strive for, but we cannot do that if we do not know the rules of the game.

Dave Schnur
Butler, PA

It's not our desire to be godlike or secretive. We're doing what we feel will serve the majority of the members. The tone of your letter seems to indicate that you feel HQ has assumed the role of final and indisputable arbiter of the point system. Nothing could be further from the truth. The important thing is that the Network has an objective, fair method for rewarding contributions to the general welfare of the membership, and to reward success in sanctioned tournaments. To achieve this, some confidentiality is required. For example, player and judge votes in tournaments must remain confidential to prevent players and judges from being quizzed about how they voted. If members understand that the results will be confidential they will be more apt to vote the way they truly

(Continued on page 31)

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Fun In Games

Passing Out Rewards

by Rick Reid

Welcome back to another stirring installment of **Fun in Games**, the column that strives to make deadlines and often misses.

Just Rewards - Part 1

There comes a time in almost every campaign when monetary rewards for doing good deeds or ridding a kingdom of monsters are just not enough. The PCs, laden with packs of gold, might "ho hum" the 10,000 gold piece reward for clearing the village of evil, even though to the village this constitutes their entire treasury. After a character has purchased every possible item to make his adventuring easier, on what does he spend the money?

Consider using the following rewards the next time your players' characters are sent on a quest or hired to rid a village of some nameless evil.

Flesh to Stone: The PCs have completed their mission and the mayor of the village invites them to the local inn for a celebration banquet and to receive their reward. After the meal, the mayor stands, and after a lengthy and embarrassing speech praising the courage and valor of the characters, instructs everyone to join him outside. There, in front of the inn, is a large object covered with a white sheet. With a flourish, the mayor whips aside the sheet to reveal...a marble statue of the PCs! Now here's where the fun begins. Perhaps the sculptor is a local talent, and his sculpting is not as good as he believes. The statue may not look a thing like the PCs (or be downright ugly) but there are their names, carved at the base! Do they graciously accept the honor or do they make some smart comment that turns the entire town against them. Or say the statue is a real work of art. Next time they visit the town it may be covered with graffiti, the heads may be missing or it may be replaced by another statue of a different party of adventurers. How do they react?

Flesh to Song: The same banquet as above is planned for the PCs. After the meal, the mayor introduces Elfis, the most popular bard in the realm. Elfis takes the stage and sings his new song — a song about the PCs and their heroic deeds. Now this can be played several ways. The song may be just plain bad or it may brag up the PCs to such an extent that they do not recognize themselves. Or say it's a really good song and becomes a hit. Everywhere the PCs go, someone is singing their song...over and over and over. Naturally, no one is going to believe that they are the real characters mentioned in the song.

A New Look At Multi-Class Characters

At one time or another most players of the AD&D® game have opted to play a multi-class character, with the fighter-magic user being one of the most popular. But have you ever really stopped to think what possesses your character to choose to pursue two separate (and often wildly divergent) professions?

Let's take a look at the above-mentioned fighter-magic user. To reach first level, he would have had to have spent much of his youth in training, in this case in both fields. Here he would be pitted against other young men and women, equally strong, equally skillful and most (if not all) subscribing to the belief that "might makes right."

When these lessons are over, he retires to a dingy study in a classroom surrounded by pasty-faced, highly intelligent students, some who have probably never seen daylight, to study over some ancient crumbling tomes and learn the arcane arts. The lessons would probably be presided over by a bearded instructor (who looks like death, himself) whose philosophy is "brains over brawn."

How would our chosen example be viewed by his fellow students? He probably would not have many friends. To his fellow fighter apprentices he would probably be considered a "bookworm" or worse, and there would surely be a not-so-subtle persuasion to give up that "stupid magic" and spend more time wielding a sword. Among the aspiring magicians, he would probably be spoken of as a "muscle-bound" oaf, naturally behind his back.

With this kind of background, is it not possible that the multi-class character might become mildly paranoid, and perhaps even a bit schizophrenic? In every encounter he must quickly decide for himself which would serve him best in the situation. He must review the lessons he learned as a fighter, and the contradictory lessons as a magic user and choose one to put into practice.

Open For Business - Part 2

Most fantasy towns contain a tavern or inn, a trader's shop, a blacksmith, and an armorer. This is fine, but sometimes the characters need something more; a place not only to spend that hard-earned treasure, but to take care of certain needs that may not be met by the mundane establishments listed above. With this in mind, we present the second in a series of new businesses that you as a DM can drop right into your pre-existing town or village.

Tree of Knowledge Book Shop

The purpose of this establishment, in game terms, is to impart knowledge to the PCs that they might not be able to gather elsewhere. The windows of this shop are streaked and dirty and a crudely-lettered sign on the locked door states "Go Away - We're Closed." If the PCs clean a section of the window and peer inside they will see haphazard piles of books and papers stacked on the floor and an odd-looking little man sitting in the middle of them.

If Gestalt, the owner, realizes that he is being watched, he will shake his fist at the offender and retreat to a darker corner of the room. Gestalt is a rather withdrawn and studious individual. He opened the bookstore so that he could be around his "beloved books" all day, but his bad business sense (coupled with the fact that he spent more time reading than waiting on customers) forced him into near-bankruptcy. This is fine with Gestalt, as the running of the shop cuts into his reading time. He knows two spells (*Sleep* and *Push*) that he stumbled across.

Most of the tomes are of a general textbook nature, but diligent searching will reveal 1st to 5th level spell books as well as any information you as DM wish the PCs to acquire. Any information gathered in the bookstore must be copied as Gestalt will not allow even his "friends" to leave the store with any books. ❑

The White Robes

A Slice of Paranoia

by Richard Bingle

Dan-V-SHK sat in his rec-o-chair in the center of his quarters listening dreamily to the human-sounding voice coming from the vid-screen on the wall in front of him.

"The Computer is your friend."

"Yes," he replied sleepily, "my only true friend."

Dan-V-SHK 6 truly was happy. While others, those Communists who didn't believe in the Computer, needed hypno-treatment to convince them of the Computer's good intentions, Dan-V-SHK 6 loyally supported the Computer at all times, even with his life (as any good troubleshooter should).

Suddenly, the soothing voice changed to the clanging of his alert signal. Dan-V-SHK 6 jumped from his dozing and pushed the receive button on the vid-screen panel. The image on the screen changed from that of happy citizens of Alpha-Complex enjoying their work in the food vats to that of the troubleshooter seal, two crossed laser pistols (white of course). The voice of the Computer started to speak.

"Dan-V-SHK 6, you are ordered to report to conference room F-9 in Alpha sector immediately."

Moments later, as Dan-V-SHK 6 walked briskly down corridor D of Gamma sector, he began to ponder the nature of his summons. The only thing that made any sense was a promotion, a promotion to Ultraviolet security clearance and the honor of the white robes. The Most High Computer had told him that it wasn't a mission briefing, and the Computer never lied, so it had to be a promotion, a promotion to the white robes.

As Dan-V-SHK 6 continued toward Alpha sector, he thought briefly of the events that had brought him to such a pinnacle in his life. As lowly Infrareds, the Dan-SHKs (all six of them) had worked in the transportation section cleaning up the messes that the scrub-bots refused to clean. It was a dirty job, but not unrewarding. The Computer compensated them well for their efforts by providing food and entertainment for them. However, some of their fellow workers didn't see things in quite the same light. After one of the dissidents had expressed her feelings to Dan-SHK 2 and invited them to join a society that she was a member of, the brothers decided that she must be reported to the Computer as a Communist. Suddenly, the brothers were promoted to security clearance Red, with a corresponding increase in responsibilities, and Dan-R-SHK 1 became a troubleshooter.

Dan-R-SHK 1 didn't serve the Computer for very long, though. During his first mission as a troubleshooter, he uncovered proof that all the other members in the strike team were either Communists or Mutants. Moments after duly reporting the knowledge to the Computer over an open channel, Dan-R-SHK 1 was killed in a weapon malfunction. When Dan-R-SHK 2 arrived at the scene an hour later, he became so grief stricken at the sight of his brother's burnt body it caused him to go into an intense rage. It was during this rage that the Dan-R-SHKs discovered the awful truth... they were Mutants. Dan-R-SHK 2 was recorded on the mission's vid-corder literally tearing the head off one of the other members of the mission. Of course, Dan-R-SHK 2 was executed on the spot by the remaining members of the mission team, and Dan-R-SHK 3, 4, 5, and 6 registered their newly found (and despised) power to the Computer.

Dan-R-SHK 3 took over the position of troubleshooter and performed his duties flawlessly until four Red security clearance troubleshooters under then Dan-Y-SHK 3 executed him without proof or orders. They, too, were executed.

The fourth brother, however, never had the opportunity to become a troubleshooter. During the time when Dan-O-SHK 3 had been making a name for himself as a loyal troubleshooter, Dan-O-SHK 4 was killed when the Infrareds and Reds working under him rioted. During the fray, Dan-O-SHK 4 was stabbed repeatedly with screwdrivers and other sharp tools. Unfortunately, an investigation failed to determine exactly who his killers had been.

Therefore, after the third brother's death, Dan-Y-SHK 5 joined the ranks of the Computer's personal troubleshooters. He quickly became an excellent agent and was therefore assigned the most dangerous missions. It was during one of these missions that Dan-B-SHK 5 disappeared along with the rest of his mission team. When Dan-B-SHK 6 questioned the Computer as to where the mission had taken place, the Computer informed him that information was not available at the present time.

However, the information was available later when the sole remaining brother had achieved Violet security clearance. Dan-V-SHK 6's twentieth mission as a Violet troubleshooter was to travel to a mysterious place called the Outside and track down and kill the members of his brother's missing mission team, including his brother. Dan-V-SHK 6 felt only pride as he carried out his brother's execution personally, for the Computer.

By this time, he had reached Alpha sector and was nearing the conference room. His pulse raced at the thought of wearing the white robes. He'd never seen anyone wearing them in person, but he did remember seeing the promotions of several Violets in the past on his vid-screen. He wondered what it would be like.

As he entered the conference room, he was greeted by the voice of the Computer asking him to take a seat facing the vid-cameras on the far wall.

"Dan-V-SHK 6, due to bravery and loyalty shown by you in your service as a troubleshooter of Alpha Complex, you are hereby promoted to the security clearance of Ultraviolet, the highest level attainable by a citizen of Alpha Complex. Please rise." As he stood, the door to the conference room opened and a Violet troubleshooter carrying a white robe entered the room. Dan-U-SHK 6 quickly unbuckled his violet reflec armor and unscrewed the violet barrel from his laser pistol. The newcomer helped him into his new robes, the white robes, and quickly left the room. Dan-U-SHK 6 turned to face the camera, a look of wonderment in his eyes. "Thank You, Most High Computer, for your generosity. The Computer is my friend," he said. The cameras clicked off. Before Dan-U-SHK 6 had time to wonder what would come next, the room was filled with white energy, focused on the spot where he was standing. Two minutes later a scrub-bot entered the room and sucked up the bit of ash on the floor, all that remained of Dan-U-SHK 6, loyal troubleshooter. ❑

Dr. Brown's Miracle Juice

A BOOT HILL® GAME ADVENTURE

by Mike Selinker

(With refreshing thanks to John Poole)

Players' Introduction

"Aaaaaaaaaahh...," sighed the balladeer as he downed the last of his bottle of Dr. Brown's Original Cream Soda. He savored the lingering taste on his tongue, enjoying the moment. When he leaned back and smiled as wide as the Grand Canyon, the boys around the campfire leaned closer for what they eagerly anticipated to be a story. Even the wild moon seemed to peer down through the clear Arizona summer night at the balladeer. He finally dropped his gaze down to his six-string's fretboard, tuning the E strings until they resounded joyfully. "You know, boys," he said at last, "this here Doc Brown's Cream is without one single solitary doubt the downright refreshingest slurp that I ever personally have downed. And I'll bet y'all think so too, am I not absolutely positively one hundred per cent correct?" The boys with the cream sodas in hand shook their heads up and down without a second's hesitation, but those drinking the Dr. Brown's Original Cel-Ray Soda and the Dr. Brown's Original Root Beer quickly defended their choices. The opposing camps squared off, a fight surely brewing over this most crucial of issues. The desert air hung still and somber, awaiting the resolution of the conflict, but the balladeer broke in with soothing, pacifying words. "Now, now, boys," he said, popping the cap off a Dr. Brown's Root Beer, "I did not for one tiny little momentary second mean to suggest, imply, or even insinuate that Dr. Brown's Original Cream Soda was somehow better than the Good Doctor's Root Beer or especially not his Original Cel-Ray, no sir, not one bit. What I meant to say — and I admit and even concede that I get a little tongue-tied with joy and delight when I talk about Dr. Brown's sodas — was that all, every single solitary variety, of Dr. Brown's Original Sodas was the downright refreshingest slurp I ever had personally the occasion to down. Now, I know you all will stand behind that like brave cowboys, won't you all?"

"You know, boys," he resumed, wiping his mouth on his ample shirtsleeve, "these here Dr. Brown's Sodas were the favorites of your parents, too?" The boys darted from their headrests, begging him to say it wasn't so. "Yup, yup, they

were, indeed. And their parents too, and their parents before them. Why these here Dr. Brown's Sodas were the flavor favorites of every generation since 1869, when the Good Old Doctor himself was cranking them out by himself in his little factory." The boys were awestruck.

"Well boys, you know, that reminds me of a story about these great sodas we here are downing so fast." The boys clamored for the story, one even going so far as to claim that if the balladeer did not tell the story, he would personally drink all of the Dr. Brown's Original Sodas himself, which horrified all present. "All right, all right, you boys twisted my arm, you did," the balladeer said, grinning. See, the story here — and it's all one hundred per cent pure D true and verifiable, I wouldn't lie to you boys — happened in the scorching summer of 1894, when the West was really wild. It concerns and deals with these six, well, gentlemen I guess is the wrong word for them. But whatever they were, they all came running when the St. Louis (that's over in Missouri boys), the St. Louis Dispatch had this here little announcement, and do you know what that there announcement said?" The boys did not, and said so. "Well, if I can remember and recollect correctly, it said: "Man coming in on 3:17 stagecoach offers $50.00 for each man to transport shipment from St. Louis to Mexico." The boys voiced their disbelief that anyone could go from Missouri to Mexico, especially before their parents' Model Ts had been invented. "Well, boys, maybe and just perhaps you misunderstood me. See, when I said Mexico I didn't mean over the border over yonder. I meant Mexico, Missouri, about fifty miles northwest from St. Louis. So these six boys came running, and here's the story of How Dr. Brown's Original Sodas Saved The Day...."

Judge's Information

The balladeer and the campfire boys have little to do with this scenario. For more than a century, Dr. Brown's Sodas have been praised by the carbonation literati as the finest mass-produced carbonated beverages in the land. Dr. Brown's Sodas started in New York and quickly spread to the West, being very popular in the period of this module, the mid-1890s. They are still available today.

The player characters will be charged with transporting a shipment of nitroglycerin concealed in bottles of Dr. Brown's Sodas from St. Louis to Mexico, a two day journey. They will be faced with various people, good and bad, who want the contents of their shipment. They will not be aware, however, that what they actually have been given is a shipment of Dr. Brown's Sodas to be transported in Dr. Brown's Soda bottles. Later, they must track down the missing nitroglycerin.

The effect Dr. Brown's Sodas had on the population of Missouri in the 1880s is exaggerated for game effect. In this scenario, everyone in Missouri knows about Dr. Brown's Sodas, and, with a few noteworthy exceptions, everyone likes them.

The player characters have responded to the ad as a source for making money. The price offered is exorbitantly high for a job that all the PCs realize should take four days, with apparently no risk. The sole exception is the Confederate Colonel, Pinkerton P. Grace, who knows that he accompanied a shipment here, but has not yet seen it. The judge need not brief the players, beyond the mere statement that each PC (except the Colonel) saw the advertisement and have considered it a remarkable price for work of its kind. (See page 17 of the BOOT HILL® rules for comparative wages.) The PCs in this module do not know each other, and they are not together at the start. All know that the 3:17 stage arrives at the Gateway to the West Hotel.

Note that **Event 1** includes almost all of the major NPCs that the PCs will meet early in the adventure. The judge must be very careful not to get these characters killed, or he or she will have to invent others and plausible reasons for the replacements.

The Judge should also note that this tournament is set in St. Louis and its environs. St. Louis was a real city in 1894, with real law enforcement. If anyone shoots or kills anyone else within the city limits, Sheriff McLemore Johnson will do his best to arrest and jail the offender. Tombstone laws and the so-called code of the West do not apply in St. Louis.

Non-player Characters

Combat statistics are listed only for relevant non-player characters (those mentioned by name in the text). They are listed by order of appearance.

Chapter One

EVENT 1: Taking the Stage

As the advertisement in the St. Louis Dispatch noted, a man (munitions financier Regimont Q. Barnstokes,) will be arriving at the Gateway to the West Hotel on the 3:17 stagecoach. The judge should make certain that all of the player characters are interested enough in the assignment to meet the stagecoach. As none of the player characters have met or are together at the beginning of the round, each may determine the time that he wants to meet the stage, within a few minutes.

At any time in the afternoon, there will be dozens to hundreds of non-player characters near Gateway to the West Hotel, which is after all in the center of the downtown district. This multitude of NPCs includes persons of every occupation and social register, including some with neither. However, there are no policemen in the area. The temperature is 90°. At 3:00 p.m., the first persons who come to wait for the stage begin to arrive at the Gateway, some going inside for a mid-afternoon snack in Gateway owner Jock Halloway's restaurant, while others wait outside on the Gateway's porch. All of the relevant non-player characters will arrive between 3:00 and 3:15.

Periwinkle Smythe arrives at 3:04, gets a cup of tea from inside and monopolizes both of the chairs (one for him, one for his tea) on the porch by the front door. He is dressed a fine English suit and carries a stylish walking stick. He speaks in a heavy English accent. He will initiate polite conversation with any respectably dressed person on the scene, but knowing he is out of his element, will be very careful with his words. If anyone (including NPCs) comes up to him asking about a newspaper ad or a shipment, he will introduce himself and say that he is the "interlocutor for the whole Nellie, don't you know." He will note that the man aboard the stagecoach, Regimont Q. Barnstokes, has the full details, and will politely decline to reveal any details until he arrives.

Dooley and Dewey Bink, two seventeen-year-old identical twins, arrive at 3:06 and scope out the area.

Sam Heart, Jennilee Heart, Rayburn McAllister, William Chant, Jason Rogers, and Dennis Farrington are eagerly awaiting the shipment of Dr. Brown's, which is supposed to come with the stage. They arrive at 3:07. By

3:17, 23 additional Missourians will come to receive the shipment. They will talk among themselves and with others about how it has been two long months since the last shipment of Dr. Brown's luscious sodas, and how life is becoming unbearable without it.

Chester Letton arrives at 3:10, intending to meet Connie Whist when she arrives on the coach. Chester is a strapping young man in overalls, fresh from a hard day's work in the blazing sun.

Dr. Ulysses Barton and his assistant Murch Mullings will arrive at 3:11. They set up their Coca-Cola wagon and begin selling bottles at four cents apiece. Dr. Barton is a wire-thin, bespectacled man in a white lab coat. Mullings is a hugely muscled bruiser dressed in plaid work clothes. While some of the crowd will eagerly purchase a bottle due to the extreme heat (and some will even beg for the pennies), Dr. Barton will be confronted by a different response when he reaches the front of the Gateway. He will make his pitch for purchasers and seem to win over a number of those assembled, but Sam Heart and Rayburn McAllister will step forward and demand to know why Barton is trying to sell Coca-Cola when everyone present knows that there is a shipment of far better soda, Dr. Brown's Cream, Root Beer, and even delicious Cel-Ray Soda coming in within minutes. The crowd turns ugly, some members demanding their money back. The crowd will be on the verge of lynching Barton and Mullings before the pair leave in terror, without refunding any money.

At 3:16, Juan Carlos O'Malley and his gang of banditos arrives on horseback and hangs back while the Dr. Barton brouhaha erupts. No one in town will worry about the banditos, despite the absence of policemen. Juan Carlos O'Malley is a Mexican-Irish bandit whose band of desperados is trying to make money, legally or (hopefully) otherwise. O'Malley is a bear of a man, with several broken teeth, slug-killing breath, and two bandoliers of bullets across his chest. His men are not quite so imposing.

Marcus Clayton's stagecoach will not arrive until 3:23, much to the thirsty Dr. Brown's fans' chagrin. On board the coach are Regimont Q. Barnstokes, stage guard Mackie Spatter, Connie Whist, and the lawyer Delbert Sarius. Barnstokes is a fat old buzzard in a business suit, while his New York lawyer is prim and neatly tailored — as are his clothes. Connie is twenty years old and exceedingly sweet. Mackie Spatter pretends to be a hardened stage guard, but is really quite nice, helping old Marcus with the bags. The wagon that the coach usually trails behind it when it brings Dr. Brown's Sodas is not present, but the crowd will not notice this at first. Marcus Clayton will begin tossing bags down to Spatter, when Sam Heart will call up to him, "Hey, Marcus, where's the Doc Brown's you said you'd bring us?" Marcus, who is one of the few people in Missouri who does not like Dr. Brown's Sodas, will respond, "Sorry, buddy, guess it didn't make the train or something. Can't you folks drink something else?" Then he turns back to his unloading. Whispers and shouts will run through the crowd: "Did he say there was no Dr. Brown's?" "Drink something else?" "Who's he think he is, telling us what we like?" The crowd looks like it will soon get mean.

It will be Dennis Farrington who first cries out, "Let's get him!" This will only focus the crowd's rage on a specific target, the coach. Unless the PCs quell the crowd, it will surge forward *en masse,* with various members screaming epithets and slogans like "Give us our Doc's!" and "Remember the Doc Brown's!" No one in the crowd will draw a gun, but Mackie Spatter, the stage guard, will try to draw his when he sees the crowd begin to riot. Rayburn McAllister and Dennis Farrington will overwhelm him before he can draw, however. Various people will be involved in Brawling (more likely Grappling than Punching), until Sam Heart gives the call to "Turn over the coach if he won't give us our Doc Brown's!" The crowd is a slight bit loco at this point, but most will not be trying to kill anyone and none will pull a gun. (Shoes and suitcases, however, are fair game.)

People trapped inside the crowd when it riots will include, but are not limited to: Spatter, Delbert Sarius, Connie Whist, Chester Letton, Periwinkle Smythe (who will get out one "I say!"), Regimont Barnstokes, and Marcus Clayton (who will be trapped on the roof of the coach until the crowd turns it over).

Juan Carlos O'Malley and his banditos watch the fight with great amusement, but will not join it. The Bink Brothers will not be so amused, but they will not interfere either. Jock Halloway, the owner of the Gateway, will send Jackie Kelpepper, his houseboy, to fetch the sheriff. Jackie will duck out the back way. Halloway will then close and barricade the front door.

The PCs can can make most of the rioters quiet down by firing a gun.

Ten minutes after the declaration of hostilities, St. Louis Sheriff McLemore Johnson and a force of five men will arrive on the scene, fire several shots into the air and surround the crowd, essentially quelling the riot. If anyone has been killed or seriously injured, Johnson will be very harsh on the rioters. If not, he will calm everybody down and ask the assemblage what in all tarnation is transpiring. After a few seconds of nervous silence, Sam Heart will say, "Sheriff, this weasel (referring to Clayton) didn't bring us the Dr. Brown's Sodas we've been waiting for so long! We... I guess we got carried away, huh?" The Sheriff will be shocked by the explanation, and gruffly say to Clayton, "Marcus, you mean to tell me that you didn't bring any Dr. Brown's Sodas? After we been without it for three months?" (It has only been two months, but the subtlety will be lost on Clayton.) Clayton will then stammer, "B-but, but Sheriff! I-i-it wasn't on... on the train, and...!" Johnson will shout, "Thunderation, Clayton, you done caused these good people sixteen tons of heartbreak, you know that?!" Addressing the crowd, he will continue, "Folks, I'm sorry about all this. I'll do my best to get to the bottom of this, don't you fret. Now all of you folks go on home, and I'll try to find out what happened to the... the... (a tear begins to well in his eye)... the Dr. Brown's Soda, and the Lord help any varmint who's stolen that soda away!"

Unless a PC stops any of the NPCs from leaving the scene, the relevant characters who will remain in front of the hotel when Jock Halloway unbarricades the Gateway's door will be: Regimont Barnstokes, Periwinkle Smythe, Delbert Sarius, Marcus Clayton, and Mackie Spatter.

EVENT 2: The Trial of the Chicano Seven

The PCs may use this opportunity to introduce themselves to Barnstokes and suggest their willingness to work for him. If so, he will appraise them, and think about their individual worths, as he judges them. However, the O'Malley banditos will also seize this moment to introduce themselves. They will ride toward the group at breakneck speed, dancing their horses in circles and shouting various Spanish words of triumph and bravado. If any PC takes this as an attack and shoots one of them, the

other banditos will unload their pistols on that individual. Otherwise, Juan Carlos O'Malley will call a halt to the group's merrymaking, prompting all of the banditos to stop and line up behind him. He will then smile a broken-toothed smile, bandoliers of bullets flashing, and introduce himself to Barnstokes: "Juan Carlos deCarolo Esposito dePuente O'Malley, at your service, senor. Myself, I and my band of transporters of shipments," he extends his hand and a bandit plants the St. Louis Dispatch in his hand, opened to the advertisement, "have answered your advertisement. No need to deal with these desperados, no?" The player characters may respond to this insult in any manner they see fit, including ignoring it. Barnstokes will say finally, "I don't work with bandits. Get out of my sight." He will emphasize this with a wave of his cheroot. Juan Carlos will try to reason with Barnstokes and Smythe, but he will not be able to convince them of his nonexistent sincerity. "I said blow, muchachos," Barnstokes will say. "I mean blow." Assuming no gunplay has taken place, Juan Carlos will scowl a bit, and then say, "Ay, hermanos, we are not wanted by the gentleman. We ride. Vaminos!" And with that, they will ride noisily away.

Barnstokes will be inclined to accept all of the PCs. Barnstokes will then tell Smythe to lead him, Sarius, and any PCs who are coming to the warehouse.

EVENT 3: Old Nitroglycerin in New Bottles

The warehouse that Barnstokes mentioned in **Event 2** is ten blocks away. The warehouse is a small wooden building next to a barbershop. When the coach reaches it, Smythe will unpadlock the door and open it to reveal an empty room with two horses and a nailed-cover wagon in it. On the side is the circular emblem: "Dr. Brown's Sodas."

"Now, gentlemen," Smythe will say to the PCs, "Mr. Barnstokes has offered quite a tidy parcel of capital for this job, I think you would all concur. Why, I think that it is an offer most generous in character and content, wouldn't..." Barnstokes will break in, "Can the commentary, Smythe. Tell them about it, Sarius." Sarius will explain, "I know what you're thinking, gentlemen, but I assure you that, as good as Dr. Brown's Sodas are, we would not be paying you $50.00 a head to transport two dozen crates of nickel soda down the line to Mexico. You see, we have a contract with the folks in Mexico to provide them something they desperately need: nitroglycerin. Never mind why the folks in Mexico need it; the point is that they do, and right now. We want you to get it to them. However, there's a law in this state against transporting nitro without approval from the state board, and we do not wish to go that route. Therefore, we have shipped these soda bottles from New York, by way of Virginia. That's why you're here, Colonel, but we had them loaded first with the nitro. And no, these aren't the same bottles of Dr. Brown's Sodas that those idiots at the hotel wanted. Like I said, it's good, but it's not that good. We want you gentlemen to drive this shipment up to Mexico, to meet a man named Jenkins. We want it known to all concerned — especially all the law enforcement officials — that you're carrying Dr. Brown's Sodas. If they figure out you're carrying nitro, we'll all be in for long stretches in Missouri prisons. But if they think you're carrying Dr. Brown's, you're not likely to get searched. It's an election year, gentlemen. The law's out in force, stopping anyone they deem suspicious. So display the label on the side proud and bold, and keep us all out of the hoosegow. I trust I don't have to tell you gentlemen how dangerous this substance is. You drop this stuff, or hit a hard bump with the wagon, and they'll be scraping you from the Missouri roadsides. Any questions?"

If the PCs have any questions, Sarius and Barnstokes will try to answer them, although they will not divulge any more information about their operation, contacts, money, or purpose. They will not show the PCs a demonstration of the nitro, as the lid of the wagon is nailed shut. If the PCs remind them of the sheriff's declaration to find the missing Dr. Brown's, Sarius will write that off as election-year speechmaking and tell them not to worry, their papers will be accurate. The PCs will be paid when they return with a signed receipt from Jenkins. Once they have answered all the questions they can or will, they give the PCs legitimate shipping papers for Dr. Brown's Soda cases and tell them to be on their way.

Barnstokes and his employees are concerned about time and will not cotton to people opening the wagon, however, the PCs may do so any time after they leave the warehouse. There is a crowbar under the wagon's headboard. As the Dr. Brown's bottles are packed in individual sixteen-unit crates of one flavor favorite each (Root Beer, Cel-Ray, and Cream Soda), the crates will have to be opened to discover the contents. Due to tight packing the actual contents cannot be discovered except under close inspection. If this is done, however, it will be evident that the supposed nitroglycerin is very fluid and bubbly. Since nitroglycerin is a heavy, oily liquid, this may cause some consternation among the PCs. They may at any time return to the warehouse, but their employers will not be there. The warehouse will be locked and stoppered, and the PCs may be forced to continue traveling through St. Louis while everyone in town stalks their Dr. Brown's. See **Event 4** for some relevant details. Note also **Event 9,** which can occur anywhere. Barnstokes and Sarius will be back at the Gateway until 5:00 p.m., when Marcus Clayton drives them to the train station on the other side of town for their 6:05 p.m. train back to the East Coast. Smythe will see his employers off and then return to the Gateway. If any of them are informed of the contents switch, they will boil and demand that the mishap be discovered so the nitro can be delivered. This is the basis for the second part of the adventure.

If the PCs leave with the Dr. Brown's emblem exposed, they will be seen by St. Louisans as described in **Event 4.** If they try to cover it up (which Barnstokes and company will not abide), they will avoid any encounters until they encounter the sheriff and his men in **Event 5.**

EVENT 4: Ignoring the Pop-ular Demand

If the PCs travel the main streets of St. Louis ostensibly driving a wagon loaded with two dozen cases of Dr. Brown's Sodas, they will most assuredly attract the attention of hundreds of passersby. Most of the St. Louisans will be dejected and aimless, as if there were clouds overhead on this bright, hot day. When the wagon passes by, however, the hue and cry that there is Dr. Brown's in town will get out. Some citizens will beg for the soda, others will offer phenomenal amounts (upwards of a dollar) for a single bottle, still others will swear to tell the sheriff that the PCs have the missing shipment, and a few will threaten the PCs' lives for being so heartless and selfish. Sam Heart and his wife Jennilee will join the crowd, as will Rayburn McAllister, Dennis Far-

rington, Jason Rogers, and William Chant (if all are still healthy). The agitators will not push the crowd to riot unless the PCs are particularly insulting. Of course, selling the Dr. Brown's Sodas (there are 384 bottles) will quell the crowd at once, and the PCs may name their price, as long as its under ten cents per bottle (which is the price of whiskey). Anyone who drinks a bottle will be amazingly refreshed, but will not explode.

EVENT 5: The Long, Thirsty Arm of the Law

Sheriff Johnson's attention will be attracted in one of two ways: the disturbance in **Event 4** or when the PCs take the road out of the city. In either case, Sheriff Johnson will quell any hot feelings if he can and try to ascertain the cause of any disturbance. He also will be conducting a routine check of all suspicious wagons, especially any labeled with the words "Dr. Brown's Sodas." He will demand to see under any wagon covers, and if he sees the emblem on the PCs' wagon he will be very suspicious. Someone in the sheriff's posse will call out, "Hey, it's the Dr. Brown's!" This will attract Missourians as in **Event 4** above. Sheriff Johnson will then want to see if indeed they are transporting Dr. Brown's, and will hint broadly that the PCs' difficulties can all be solved if they just slip the sheriff a bottle of Dr. Brown's Cel-Ray. If the PCs do so, the sheriff will wave them on with his blessings, then slip into a lonely alley to down the refreshing drink. If the PCs refuse this bribe, he will be very stern, demand to see all the relevant papers, and march them down to the records office to check to see if those papers are legitimate. ("There're thieves around, you know.") The process shouldn't take more than a few hours. (See **Event 6** if this occurs.) If the PCs want to make a break for it with the wagon, the sheriff's men will try to stop them. The referee should ask, of course, whether the PCs really want to drive the wagon so quickly over the bumpy, potholed street.

EVENT 6: Keeping a Dr. Brown's on File

This event will only occur if the sheriff marches the PCs to the records office. The records office is about half a mile from the site of **Event 5**. The sheriff will tell the PCs to leave the wagon outside with his men. Wise PCs will leave one of their own with the wagon as well. (If they do, the sheriff's men will not steal any Dr. Brown's.) Inside, a mousy clerk with a heavy German accent is filing papers, including the ones from today's train deliveries. The clerk, named Gustav Jimmler, will greet the sheriff, who will continue to be very angry. "Check these boys out. There's something fishy about them," he will snap. If the PCs produce their papers, Jimmler will eye them casually, reading the legalese softly until he hits the words, "384 bottles of Dr. Brown's Root Beer, Dr. Brown's Cel-Ray, and Dr. Brown's Cream Sodas," which he will stammer out, trembling. "You haff zum of Herr Doktor Braun's Sodas, then?" he will ask, clearly hoping for an affirmative answer. The records officer will then drop to his knees, tearfully begging the PCs to give him just one bottle, just one. If they refuse to bribe Jimmler, he will beg until his last hope of drinking a Dr. Brown's Soda is gone. Then, he will straighten himself, and the sheriff will ask him if the PCs are legit. Jimmler will have to concede that they are, but ask the sheriff if there isn't some way to appropriate the soda as evidence of something illegal, like an attempted bribe. The sheriff will continue to stall until he realizes that there really is no legal way to confiscate a legal piece of private property, and will let the PCs go.

EVENT 7: The Road to Mexico

If the PCs get out of St. Louis alive and intact, and head along the road to the town of Mexico fifty miles away, they will find the road relatively smooth. They will have to cross the bridge across the Missouri River to the city of St. Charles, about five miles from St. Louis. They will notice a large congregation of people near the bridge. As they get closer, it will be obvious that the people are construction workers, and they are working on restructuring the central section, which has been removed. The PCs will also note that there is an unfamiliar platform of logs projecting from the right side of the bridge. The platform is 10-feet square and about five feet lower than the main bridge, but still 50 feet above the mighty Missouri. There is a thin guardrail on the platform's far side. The platform supports various workers toiling on the bridge. When a bridge worker sees the PCs' wagon, he will call out, "Another wagon coming through!" Other workers will turn to look at the PCs and then begin to leap up on the main bridge. The foreman will motion the PCs to cross the bridge. If they try to go up on the main bridge, the foreman, Jim Wilkinson, will stop them, cursing and fuming, "What in the Sam Hill are you lunkheads doing? Can't you see the bridge is being fixed? Now, if you're a-crossing, go on the side platform, you stupid idiots!" If they want to turn back, he will shout, "And good riddance to stinking rubbish!" in disgust, and order his men to go back to work. If the PCs change their mind again after the men begin to leap down on the platform, Wilkinson will be furious, but will demand that they be quick about crossing.

The platform will shake as they begin their crossing. The bridge crossing should be a terrifying experience for the PCs. However, the platform will hold and the PCs will make it across.

EVENT 8: The Patience of a St. Charles

The temperature still will be in the nineties as the PCs enter St. Charles, a city of about 5,000 people. They will note a huge crowd gathered in front of a general store. If the PCs spend a few moments trying to comprehend the shouting, they will pick out the phrases, "I'll pay fifteen cents!" "Sixteen cents!" As the PCs try to figure out what is going on (probably assuming, wrongly, that Dr. Brown's is at the heart of this event as well) or move toward the crowd, Ned Bryant, a Deputy U.S. Marshal, will come up behind them. Anyone looking behind the wagon will notice him. If the PCs bolt, he will chase them on his Excellent horse (the PCs' horses are fair, and they are pulling a wagon). Otherwise, he will hail the PCs and wipe his brow, commenting, "Ain't it a boiler, though?" He will comment on the crowd, noting that in this heat, people will drink anything. If asked what is going on, he will say, "Why, this hombre showed up with this soft drink, Cokie-Cola or something." He will identify himself (although the badge should identify him) and say that he has to check all incoming wagons, "regulations, you know." He will then ask to see what the PCs are hauling. If they tell him it is "Dr. Brown's Sodas" or show the emblem or the sodas to him, he will shout out the name loudly enough so that some people in the crowd hear it. The crowd will quickly surround the PCs' wagon, leaving Dr. Bar-

ton and Murch Mullings alone around their Coca-Cola wagon.

Barton will be very angry, and will order Murch to push his way through the crowd. Barton will follow closely behind. When they reach the wagon the PCs will recognize them, assuming any were at the Gateway to witness the incident there. With Marshal Bryant on the other side of the wagon, Murch will kick the wheels as instructed by Barton. Quick reactions by the PCs will avoid a second kick. However, if he gets a second kick in, he will smash the spokes, causing the wagon to crash to the ground. Needless to say, it will not explode. If not stopped, Murch will rip the wagon cover off with his bare hands (if it is still in place) and begin tossing out the bottles left and right. Some will shatter, but others will be caught by St. Charles citizens, who will greedily tear off the bottlecaps (possibly at considerable damage to their hands) and down the contents. Marshal Bryant will stop Mullings if the PCs do not do so, and will arrest him and Barton for disturbing the peace. Barton's wagon will be impounded.

EVENT 9: The Chicano Seven Rides Again

This encounter should occur immediately after the PCs discover what they are really carrying.

The O'Malley gang walks their horses out from behind the trees, or the buildings, or whatever cover is present and blocks the PCs' path. O'Malley should have six desperados with him, unless any were killed earlier. If O'Malley was killed earlier, the group encountered is O'Malley's real brother, Carlos Juan O'Malley, and there are eight desperados with him. They allow their ugliness to seep in for a second, and then O'Malley speaks, "So, me amigos, you have the shipment that the man wanted us to deliver for him. What is in it, I wonder, my hermanos? The man surely would not pay you fifty greenbacks to deliver the soft drinks, no? Well, my friends, I wish you to surrender the shipment, and my brothers may let you live." The bandit's tactics, if they have any, will depend largely on the location where this encounter occurs. They will use any cover available, and all will try to escape if O'Malley is killed. If, at any time during this encounter, anyone grabs a bottle of Dr. Brown's and claims that it is nitro while waving it menacingly, O'Malley will call for a retreat, knowing that it cannot possibly be soda pop.

EVENT 10: Give Away, Keep Away

If, after St. Charles, the PCs are unaware that they are transporting soda, use the following dead drop event.

Two eight-year-old boys, Ferdie and Gurdie Smit, are playing in an alley with a stick of dynamite. They have lit the fuse and will roll it out into the street, approximately twenty-five feet from the player characters' wagon. It will explode as per the dynamite injury table in the BOOT HILL® game rules. The wagon will be blown on its side, and several bottles will shatter, some oozing the carbonated contents into the street. Ferdie and Gurdie will run like the dickens.

Chapter Two

"Darn!" cried the balladeer as his hand, outstretched to imitate a wagon being blown on its side by dynamite, toppled his bottle of Dr. Brown's. The boys gasped as the frothy liquid inside gurgled out and fizzled on the sand. The balladeer quickly recovered the bottle and sat back up, smiling lamely. "Well boys, I ain't seen a sorrier sight than that, but it does get you to thinkin about what all that Dr. Brown's looked like spilt all over the street like that. So anyway, the boys spent the night in St. Charles, because they couldn't get across the bridge over the Missouri. They got their wagon fixed, and still had two hundred, yes, two hundred bottles of Dr. Brown's left unbroken. The next day, the guys went back to find Barnstokes, but he'd caught a train out of town with his law guy. They got the English guy, Periwinkle Smythe, though; he was still holed up at the Gateway to the West Hotel. They got him out of bed at 9:00 a.m., and told him all about what happened the day before. Well now, no one knows exactly what old Periwinkle said, but is was probably something like: " 'Well, chaps, if this isn't just a dandy wicket in Spain! And you say you have no ken of the dastard that's done this one on us? Oh, my stars, and with Mr. Barnstokes and Mr. Sarius gone back to New York thinking all's chipper and close-handed! Well, I shall just have to take the initiative once again, shan't I? Gentlemen, I don't think it would be unfair, considering the vast sums we are paying you to deliver this shipment, to ask your assistance in rousting up the missing nitroglycerin. You shall be paid upon conclusion of your original assignment, the delivery to Mexico. Do we have an agreement?' " And, of course, the boys said yes. Then the Brit probably said something like: " 'Well, chaps, my devices would suggest a trip to the locomotive depot to find out if there are any clues as to which ruffian absconded with the goods, if you will permit a smidgen of Western vernacular. Oh, I love a good mystery! Well, chaps, I will be in my room. Call up if you find the lolly, won't you? Oh, and don't advertise that you've got that silly soft drink. It appears that the locals actually like the rot. Cheerio!' " So, the boys skedaddled down to the train station, or maybe they went to the Public Records office first, I dunno...."

LOCATION A: The Train Depot

The train station is a large place, so merely "going to the train station" will not do. They may go to the station house, the roundhouse, the trains themselves, or other areas at the gamemaster's discretion. Only the station house will yield any information.

Franklin Wellfeather, the clerk at the station house, has passed all records of yesterday's shipments to the records office in town, where Gustav Jimmler works. Wellfeather is a spindly man with little backbone, he will call his superior if something comes up which is slightly beyond his abilities. His superior is Phineas Link, the station master. Link is a robustly built man with a pot belly. He talks in a booming voice that can heard throughout the building. If the PCs ask him about a wagon or a crate without describing its contents, he will laugh loudly and say that the railroad gets more than one of those per day. They will need to mention the Dr. Brown's sodas or allude so broadly to those contents that he makes the inference. He will then bellow, "Oh, the Dr. Brown's!" If the PCs are expecting a riot, they will be in for a surprise. The people in the station house heard enough talk about Dr. Brown's yesterday. They jeer at the PCs for bringing up the subject again. Some may even throw things.

Link remembers the Dr. Brown's for two reasons: he hasn't had any in months, and that there were two shipments of Dr. Brown's rather than the usual one. Both were picked quickly. If asked by whom, he will remember instantly "some limey character, all pomp and circumference," obviously referring to Periwinkle Smythe. The other will take longer, but he will remember finally, "Oh, yeah, a couple of young hooligans. But they had the right

papers, so I gave it to them." He does not remember their names, nor does he remember who came first.

LOCATION B: The City Records Office

The only person here is Rosasharn Braddock Jimmler, a young woman who is up to her neck in papers. She is the daughter-in-law of Gustav Jimmler. She will be able, with great difficulty, to find almost any document the PCs ask for. The railroad shipping records from yesterday say that a Mr. Periwinkle Smythe and a Mr. John Smith picked up deliveries of Dr. Brown's Sodas yesterday. There is a Mr. John Smith living on the edge of town, at 1487 Crestine Lane. If asked specifically about deliveries of Dr. Brown's Sodas before yesterday, she will very quickly discover an apparently misfiled record which indicates that a huge crate of Dr. Brown's came in by ship only two weeks ago, and was delivered to a Mr. Max Claiborne. Claiborne lives at 200 Barleycorn Way, close to the center of town. If asked about Josiah Findley, she will find an address, 412 Blackie Circle, as a residence, and an expired certification for a wainwright shop at 138 Kannigher Street.

LOCATION C: John Smith's House, 1487 Crestine Lane

This is a red herring. The people who picked up the shipment used that name as an unimaginative alias. The real John Smith, a middle-aged retired gunslinger, is protecting the wanted criminal Mosey McCone, who is calling in an old debt. Smith is not certain he wants McCone using his house as a hideout, but McCone has an old oath and a new .44 as convincers.

LOCATION D: Sheriff's Office

The deputy in charge of the front desk is a rude, mumbly man named Ferdinand Willstone. Any requests for documents will be forwarded to the City Records Office. If someone asks to see Sheriff McLemore Johnson, Willstone will say that he is "out investigating some murder or other." Willstone will not give the sheriff's whereabouts, but the PCs can wait, or they can leave a message. The sheriff will return in about an hour, and brush them off as he storms into his office. Several other deputies follow him. Those not actually inside the office will hear him bark orders to them, but the substance will not be apparent. The words "Old Findley" and "Doc Brown's" will be heard several times. (He is talking about the apparent murder at Josiah Findley's place, see **Location F.**) After this, Willstone will point out the PCs. Johnson will recognize them as "the varmints who caused me so much trouble with the Doc Brown's yesterday." He will not waste his time helping the PCs.

LOCATION E: Josiah Findley's Place

This shack has at least two deputies around it at all times. They will not let anyone inside. However, if the sheriff is not present, they will be inclined to talk about the incident, if only as a defense mechanism against thinking too hard about such a horrible way to die. It seems that old Josiah blew apart after downing a bottle of Dr. Brown's typically smooth Cream Soda. One of the officers has a fragment of a bottle which has the words "DR. BR SOD" on it. The deputies say that Josiah definitely blew up from the inside out, as his dinner is splattered all over the dining room. The obvious suspicion, they say, is that someone laced the Dr. Brown's with nitroglycerin. The deputies say that no other bottle of Dr. Brown's was found inside. If asked about acquaintances of Josiah Findley, they respond that there's only the Binks, Dooley and Dewey, but they loved the old man. They live here, but typically hang out in the old wainwright place that Findley used to operate on Kannigher Street.

LOCATION F: The Hideout

This old wainwright building is the well-known hideout of Dooley and Dewey Bink, two seventeen-year-old identical twins. They have a stash of Dr. Brown's Sodas that they heisted from Max Claiborne's. Their original intention was to steal the shipment of Dr. Brown's for their guardian, Josiah Findley, who was going slightly crazy without it. They saw the dual shipment come in while loitering near the rail yards, and decided no one would miss one of them. They forged the papers that allowed them to get the shipment from the station master, and brought a bottle to Findley. Afterwards, but before Findley tried to drink it, they figured out on their own that the oily liquid was not Dr. Brown's. Dooley threw a bottle into a trash can. They switched the shipment for Claiborne's and brought it back to Findley's place, where they saw the messy aftermath of Findly's drinking.

LOCATION G: Max Claiborne's House, 200 Barleycorn Way

Max Claiborne unwittingly has the nitro. A crate of what he believes to be Dr. Brown's Sodas sits in his tool shed. It was soda until earlier today, when the Bink Brothers snatched it and replaced it with nitroglycerin.

Max will definitely not want to talk about Dr. Brown's Soda, even about Cel-Ray, his favorite. He believes he has the only supply in town, and wants to keep it secret.

THE END

When the PCs pick up the nitro from Max Claiborne and go back to the hotel to hook up with Periwinkle Smythe, they will encounter bands of jubilant merrymakers downtown. Everybody has a Dr. Brown's Soda. The whole downtown area is in a festive mood, awash on luscious seas of Dr. Brown's Sodas. If the revelers are asked about the source of the bounty, all will say the Gateway Hotel. In front of the Gateway, two boys in plaid knickerbockers and felt fedoras are passing out Dr. Brown's Sodas to members of the throng, all of whom are gladly paying the nickel required.

Inside, the revelry is quite intense. Periwinkle sits at a table in the main room. He will hail the PCs when he sees them. He is chatting with the man sitting next to him. The man looks scholarly and wise, his tiny spectacles complementing his wizened features. As the PCs come closer, Smythe will shout above the cacophony, "Well, chaps, did you find the delinquent explosives?" If they answer yes, he will continue, "Ah, yes, well, that's just cricket, isn't it though? Well, chaps, I'm pleased to say that you can just jolly well keep the nitroglycerin. Oh, yes, you can do what you want with it. The man Jenkins of Mexico was going to pay Barnstokes and me a clear thousand of your American dollars for that, you know. I'm certain clever boys like you can find a way to drum up the price even higher. Well, none of it's my Nellie any more, chaps. You see, I'm leaving the munitions business. Too dangerous. No, I'm going into business with this man here. Oh, forgive my barbarous manners, gentlemen. Chaps, I'd like you to meet Dr. Brown...."

The quiet gentleman next to Periwinkle extends a slender hand, and peers down the frames of his spectacles. "Charmed," he says, "would you like a Cel-Ray?" ❑

PECOS JAKE McFARLAN

Luckless Texan Gold Miner and Panhandler

SPD: 41 *Quick, +4 Spd Mod*
GAC: 49 *Above Avg., +2 Acc Mod*
TAC: 68 *Good, +7 Acc Mod*
STR: 90 *Strong, 17 hp*
BRA: 70 *Brave, +2 Spd Mod, +6 Acc Mod*
EXP: 76 *3 Gunfights*
Age: 39
Height: 6′ 4″
Weight: 268 lbs.
Handedness: Right

WPN	MSP	R(S/M/L/E)	MAC	RF/RR
9R	1	20/40/80/200	58	3/3
DAR6	11	4/10/20/40	58	3/3
KN	11	1/2/3/4	63	1/0

Items Carried

Left Side

Throwing Knife	Belt
Picture of Mary	Pants Pocket
$6 cash	Pants Pocket
$.99 change	Pants Pocket
Pipe	Shirt Pocket
Tobacco (6)	Shirt Pocket

Center/Back/Feet

Rifle	Carried
10-Gallon Hat	Head
Vest, Shirt	Torso
Trousers	Legs
Pipe	Shirt Pocket
Tobacco (6)	Shirt Pocket

LIGHTNIN' JED HAWTHORNE

Kansan Professional Loafer and Occasional Bounty Hunter

SPD: 97 *Greased Ltg, +19 Spd Mod*
GAC: 75 *Good, +7 Acc Mod*
TAC: 24 *Below Avg, −3 Acc Mod*
STR: 45 *Above Avg, 14 hp*
BRA: 21 *Average*
EXP: 41 *1 Gunfight, −5 Acc Mod*
Age: 33
Height: 6′ 1″
Weight: 245
Handedness: Left

WPN	MSP	R(S/M/L/E)	MAC	RF/RR
FDR5	29	3/7/15/30	52	3/3
FDR5	29	3/7/15/30	52	3/3
KN	24	1/2/3/4	42	1/0

Items Carried

Left Side

Revolver	Holster
Chaw	Shirt Pocket
$4 cash	Pants Pocket
$.98 change	Pants Pocket

Center/Back/Feet

Stetson Hat	Head
Shirt, Vest	Torso
Trousers	Legs
Boots	Feet

Right Side

Revolver	Holster
Hunting Knife	Boot

COLONEL PINKERTON P. GRACE

Retired Confederate States of America Army Officer from Virginia

SPD: 06 *Slow, −2 Spd Mod*
GAC: 25 *Below Avg, −3 Acc Mod*
TAC: 17 *Below Avg, −3 Acc Mod*
STR: 20 *Sickly, 12 hp*
BRA: 98 *Fearless, +4 Spd Mod, +15 Acc Mod*
EXP: 00 *86 Gunfights, +10 Acc Mod*
Age: 65
Height: 6′
Weight: 150
Handedness: Right
Vision Defect: Must wear monocle for distance vision

WPN	MSP	(S/M/L/E)	MAC	RF/RR
CBR	2	3/7/12/26	72	3/1

Items Carried

Left Side

Saber	Scabbard
Scabbard	Belt
Medals	Chestboard Sash
Chestboard	Over Heart
3 $50 Bills	Coat Pocket

Center/Back/Feet

CSA Hat	Head
CSA Suit	Body
Sash	Torso
Boots	Feet
Epaulets	Shoulders

Right Side

Revolver	Holster
Monocle & Chain	Chest Pocket

Other Items Owned

Box of 14 balls for revolver
Ol' Dauntless (Fair gray horse)
Saddle & riding bridle

Brief Personal History: Colonel Pinkerton P. Grace fought with the right side in the War for Independence (known to heathen northerners as the American Civil War), not with those lilly-livered, snow-loving pansywaists from north of the May-Dix, all talking about emancipation and tariffs and reconstruction and other fancy intellectual words. The battles at Raleigh and Dixboro were long and hard, but Grace welcomed them gleefully. When that thieving, plantation- razing General Ulysses S. Grant took advantage of fair-fighting, square-dealing General Robert E. Lee, Colonel Grace was decommissioned and told never to wear the proud Stars and Bars again. Never one to take the words of a heathen northerner too seriously, Colonel Grace wears his uniform as often as possible. He will always side with a cause that supports the great south (which will rise again, never fear) and demands that other southerners do so as well. He has come by train to St. Louis, Missouri, to see to the transportation of some unknown shipment which an old Confederate buddy of his told him was vitally important to the south's interests in Missouri.

Brief Personal History: Lightnin' Jed Hawthorne has phenomenal speed with a six shooter. As a kid, he intended to become a professional bounty hunter, gunning down the rustlers and robbers, and those who prey on decent, law-abiding folks. However, his first job, chasing down Wild Ichabod Twiggings, taught him deep personal truism: Bad guys shoot back. After learning this, Jed established the credo that has made him reasonably well feared in the small towns where he takes residence: "I never draw on a man what's lookin' at me." His reputation for bringing down men before they even know he's in the vicinity has spread, although not very far and not very wide. He is in St. Louis, Missouri to rectify that situation.

Right Side

Revolver	Holster

Brief Personal History: Jacob McFarlan has wandered the mighty Pecos River and its tributaries from Penasco to Comstock, through Santa Rosa and the arid Stockton Plateau, and across the blustery Sangre de Cristo Guadalupe Mountains. He has starved in Artesia and Puerta de Luna, fought gunslingers in wild Carlsbad and Santa Rosa, and panned gold in a dozen towns called Pecos; all for that ever-elusive devil's mineral — Gold. But Jake hasn't find any, not a single nugget. Not on three trips up and down the Pecos. Nevertheless, a half-dozen townsfolk labeled him "Pecos Jake," and he kept the name despite his failures. He has since wandered other rivers, gaining neither their gold nor their names. Jake is married to a woman named Mary, who consistently demands he give up prospecting and find some respectable work so that she can have furs like all the other women. He has come to St. Louis, Missouri, both to satisfy and to escape her nagging demands.

BILLY-BILL CHINTONE

Missourian Cathouse Bouncer

SPD: 82 *Very Fast, +10 Spd Mod*
GAC: 05 *Very Poor, −9 Acc Mod*
TAC: 96 *Crack Shot, +18 Acc Mod*
STR: 99 *Mighty, 20 hp*
BRA: 75 *Brave, +2 Spd Mod, +6 Acc Mod*
EXP: 35 *0 Gunfights, −10 Acc Mod*
Note: His Crack Shot Throwing Accuracy rating applies to large objects and even to people.

Age: 17
Height: 6′ 8″
Weight: 294 lbs.
Handedness: Right

WPN	MSP	WR(S/M/L/E)	MAC	RF/RR
TMHK	17	1/2/3/4	64	1/0

RIVERBOAT SPINKS MacGRUDER

Professional Cheat, Hoodwinker and Part-Time Justice of the Peace

SPD: 92 *Lightning, +15 Spd Mod*
GAC: 68 *Good, +7 Acc Mod*
TAC: 78 *Very Good, +10 Acc Mod*
STR: 40 *Average, 13 hp*
BRA: 50 *Above Avg, +1 Spd Mod, +3 Acc Mod*
EXP: 86 *4 Gunfights*
Age: 36
Height: 5′10″
Weight: 140
Handedness: Ambidextrous
Gambler Rating :09

WPN	MSP	R(S/M/L/E)	MAC	RF/RR
FDR6	26	3/7/15/30	60	3/3
FDR6	26	3/7/15/30	60	3/3

ALPHONSE "LEECH" MANMOUTH

Ousted Texas Ranger Posing as a Texas Ranger

SPD: 80 *Fast, +9 Spd Mod*
GAC: 87 *Excellent, +15 Acc Mod*
TAC: 38 *Above Avg, +2 Acc Mod*
STR: 65 *Sturdy, 15 hp*
BRA: 64 *Brave, +2 Spd Mod, +6 Acc Mod*
EXP: 87 *4 Gunfights*
Age: 31
Height: 6′ 1″
Weight: 188 lbs.
Handedness: Right

WPN	MSP	R(S/M/L/E)	MAC	RF/RR
2SG	6	6/12/18/36	71	2/2
SAR6	19	4/10/20/40	71	3/3

Items Carried

Left Side

$5 cash	Pants Pocket
$.38 change	Pants Pocket
Brass Badge	Breast

Center/Back/Feet

Stetson	Head
Vest,Shirt	Torso
Trousers	Legs

Right Side

Revolver	Holster
Wax Impression of Badge	Pants Pocket

Other Items Owned

Fair Brown Horse
Saddle & Whip

Brief Personal History: Alphonse Manmouth got the nickname "Leech" when his superiors accurately identified his habit of freeloading off the efforts of others. He was summarily kicked out of the Texas Rangers when he claimed credit for stopping two horse thieves that were actually captured by the Branch Chief Officer of the Rangers. He likes the name Leech. He has a habit of sucking air through his lips in a hissing sound, making the name sound especially accurate. Since Leech liked being a Texas Ranger so much, he made a wax impression of his badge before he had to surrender it. He had a brass copy of it made shortly thereafter, and has roamed the countryside all the way to St. Louis, Missouri, looking for Ranger-type things to do.

Items Carried

Left Side

Marked Deck	Shirt Pocket
Loaded Dice	Shirt Pocket
Revolver	Holster
Mustache Wax	Pants Pocket
$10 cash	Pants Pocket
$.90 change	Pants Pocket

Center/Back/Feet

Gaucho Hat	Head
Vest	Torso
Laced Shirt	Torso
Chaps	Legs
Belt, Holsters	Waist
Bullets	Belt
Boots	Feet

Right Side

Unmarked Deck	Shirt Pocket
Unloaded Dice	Shirt Pocket
Revolver	Holster

Other Items Owned

Traveling case
Three changes of clothes (including one slick dress outfit)
Mustache Wax (in case)
Mirror (in case)
Razor, strop and soap (in case)
2 New, marked decks (in case)
2 New, unmarked decks (in case)
Box of bullets (in case)
Forged certificate as Justice of the Peace (in case)
Hip flask of brandy (in case)

Brief Personal History: Riverboat Spinks MacGruder estimates he has lived in 180 different towns in the last two decades, fleecing marks in the steamboats and saloons of the south and new west. A top-draw card shark and hustler, MacGruder lives grasping-hand-to-garrulous-mouth. His gatling-gun speech takes more than one monkey by surprise in a game of faro or blindsides. One of MacGruder's longest stays was in the town of Plain Dealing, Louisiana (near Shreveport in northwest Louisiana), where he settled down for six months posing as a legally-certified Justice of the Peace. He has used this scam in a number of towns since. He is now in St. Louis, Missouri, looking for employment.

Items Carried

Left Side

Picture of Eloise & Mammy	Pants Pocket
$11 cash	Pants Pocket
$.14 change	Pants Pocket

Center/Back/Feet

Loose Shirt	Torso
Overalls	Body
Boots	Feet
Belt	Waist

Right Side

Tomahawk	Belt

Other Items Owned

Rucksack
Several shirts and pairs of overalls (in rucksack)
14 chocolate bars, wrapped to avoid melting (in rucksack)

Brief Personal History: William "Billy-Bill" Chintone was raised by Mammy Shingle, proprietor of Mammy Shingle's Emporium of Delights, a brothel in Peculiar (near Kansas City, MO). Since he wasn't too bright but had the size and strength of an ox, Mammy put him to work as a bouncer. There, he learned the skills that have carried him through his short life, such as knowing when to look and when not to look. He also took a liking to one of Mammy's girls, Eloise. He doesn't quite understand why, when he first began noticing Eloise was so pretty, Mammy suggested he go out and find some honest work. (As he said at the time, "But I like my work, honest!") But on his seventeenth birthday, he packed a sack and set out all the way to St. Louis to find some honest work, whatever that is.

Name	SPD	GAC	TAC	BRAVERY	EXP	ST	WPN	BSP	BAC
The Arms Dealers:									
Regimont Q. Barnstokes	-5	0	0	0/0	-10	12	Cane		
Delbert Sarius	0	-6	+2	−4/−6	−10	11	Briefcase		
Periwinkle Smythe	+4	−9	+2	−4/−6	−10	13	Cane		
The Coach Employees:									
Marcus Clayton	0	+5	+10	0/0	−10	13	2D	5	45
Mackie Spatter	+4	+7	+7	+2/+6	0	16	DAR6	11	63
The Young Lovers:									
Connie Whist	+4	−9	0	0/0	−10	10	None		
Chester Letton	+2	+5	+7	+3/+10	−10	17	Fists		
The Dr. Brown's Fanatics:									
Sam Heart	+12	+2	+10	+4/+15	−10	18	Fists		
Jennilee Heart	+4	0	0	+1/+3	−10	13	None		
Rayburn McAllister	+2	+7	0	+3/+10	−5	17	Fists		
Dennis Farrington	+12	0	+2	+5/+15	+2	15	Fists		
Jason Rogers	0	+4	+2	+1/+3	−5	14	SAR5	9	52
William Chant	+6	+7	0	+2/+6	+2	13	DAR6	13	65
The Bink Brothers:									
Dooley Bink	+4	+2	+7	+2/+6	−10	14	1D	6	48
Dewey Bink	+4	+2	+7	+2/+6	−10	14	1D	6	48
The O'Malley Banditos:									
Juan Carlos O'Malley	+9	+7	+2	+4/+15	+6	18	9R	8	78
							FDR6	23	78
							KN	18	78
Generic banditos	+2	0	0	0/0	0	13	FDR5	12	50
(Note: if used, Carlos Juan O'Malley has the same statistics as Juan Carlos, his brother, above.)									
The Competition:									
Dr. Ulysses Barton	−2	−6	+2	−2/−3	−10	9	None		
Murch Mullings	+6	−6	+7	+4/+15	−5	20	2SG	5	54
Civil Servants of St. Louis:									
Sheriff McLemore Johnson	+12	+15	+7	+3/+10	+8	15	FDR6	25	73
Generic policemen	+4	+2	+2	+1/+3	0	14	FDR6	15	55
Gustav Jimmler	−6	−9	−6	−4/−6	−10	8	None		
Rosasharn Braddock	Jimmler	0	−3	0	0/0	−10	0	None	
Employees of the Gateway:									
Jock Halloway	+15	+10	+10	+2/+6	+8	17	15R	12	74
Jackie Kelpepper	+22	0	+7	0/0	−10	13	None		
Natives of St. Charles:									
Jim Wilkinson	0	0	+2	+2/+6	−10	19	Sledgehammer		
Marshal Ned Bryant	+9	+10	+5	+3/+10	0	16	SAR6	20	70
Ferdie & Gurdie Smit	+6	−6	+5	−2/−3	−10	10	Dynamite		
Train Depot Employess:									
Franklin Wellfeather	−2	−9	+10	−4/−6	−10	9	Paper	balls	
Phineas Link	−2	0	0	+1/+3	−10	15	None		
At John Smith's House:									
John Smith	+6	+10	+2	+1/+3	+2	14	LBR	7	65
(Note: Smith's long barrel revolver is in a desk drawer)									
Mosey McCone	+12	+7	+2	+3/+10	+6	17	LBR	15	73
							FDR5	25	73
At Hinton's Restautant:									
Rudolf Hinton	−5	−6	−3	+1/+3	−10	13	None		
Wilma Crayson	0	−9	+5	+5/+15	−10	9	Sign		
Nellie Cross	+4	0	+5	+5/+15	−10	18	Sign		
Generic WCTU Protestor	0	−9	−9	+2/+6	−10	12	Sign		
The Claibornes:									
Max Claiborne	0	+2	+5	0/0	−10	17	Saw		
Erma Claiborne	+6	−9	+10	+3/+10	−10	13	Rolling pin		
Edna and Liza Claiborne	+2	−9	−9	−2/−3	−10	8	None		

Radiating Magic

Unique Items

by Costa Valhouli and Fran Hart

With all these creative minds running about in the RPGA™ Network, it is inevitable that several people will occasionally write articles on the same topic. We are fortunate in this instance that two such authors have favored us with different approaches to the problems of player familiarity with the "regular" known magic items. Costa Valhouli provides a number of powerful one-of-a-kind weapons and suits of armor, while Fran Hart lists less-powerful (but no less interesting and clever) miscellaneous magic items, some with more frivolous uses.

One-of-a-Kind: Major magic weapons and armor

The characters have just defeated another red dragon. As they check through the creature's hoard, their elation quickly turns to boredom. "What's this," they cry in despair. "Only 12,000 gold coins, some potions, and a +3 sword?"

If this scene has occured in your campaign, then you know that the characters have been exposed to too many magic items. Each party member has their own weapon +3, +4, or +5, and killing Tiamat just isn't the same fun that it used to be.

To spice up the hoard of a powerful monster or creature, instead of giving the characters lots of "standard" magic weapons, how about giving them something unique? Unique weapons/armor/whatever should be limited in number, more powerful than normal weapons (but not as powerful as artifacts), and very rare. They were usually crafted long before the characters' era, perhaps at a time when powerful mages walked the earth and enchanted incredible items.

The characters can quest for the item (after hearing tales of it, etc.), or find it accidentally, but the adventure doesn't end when the characters find it. These items have some sort of history built up around them ("...used by the great Muck-A-Muck of Zeep..."), and are worth a lot more to collectors. They might be the key to some age-long mystery, and some of the past owner's history might be discovered through use of divination spells. Cursed unique items are uncommon, but possible. ("With her dying breath, the witch Jaadhar cursed the weapon which had struck her a mortal blow..."). They are useful for opening up a whole new set of adventures to the characters (lift the curse, destroy the orcs, etc.).

The following are examples of unique major magic items that you might want to drop into your campaign to spice up an adventure:

MAGIC WEAPONS

Mervic's Dagger

This bejeweled, ornate silver weapon acts as a +2 weapon in the hands of anyone but a Neutral Good mage. But in the hands of such a one, it becomes a +5 weapon. It augments their effective character level by 2 when carried, and the level increase applies to spells, hit points, and to-hit tables. It is semi-sentient, and can communicate with its owner telepathically. It is rumored to have some other innate abilities, but sages differ on the details.

It once belonged to the renowned mage Mervic, who carried it with him always. It was found by a group of adventurers who searched his fortress after hearing rumors of his mysterious disappearance, but it was lost in later years and is said to be in the hoard of a particularly loathsome lich.
Alignment: Neutral Good
Ego: 19 Intelligence: 23
Languages: NG, Common, Elvish, Dwarvish, Halfling, Gnomish

Caeren-Uroth

This is the fabled blade given to Reordin, a human ranger, who was hailed as "Defender of the Forests" by a large settlement of gray elves under seige by a platoon of gnolls who wanted to make the forest into lumber.

The sword, whose name in elven means "Blade of the Forest," grants abilities as if the wielder were an elf, and allows the bearer to automatically *speak with animals* and cast *animal friendship* 3 times each per day.

Caeren-Uroth is a +3 broadsword in the hands of any person who can wield a sword, but its special abilities only work when in the hands of a neutral good ranger. The sword is finely and simply crafted, and the crossguard is shaped like a ring of oak leaves. An amber gem in the center of the haft contains a splinter of wood from a holy tree of Rillifane Rallathil. The sword's current location is unknown.

Mace of Tasirond

Tasirond, a follower of Solerus the sun-god, crafted this mace to help him in his personal quest to rid the world of undead. The mace is large, heavy, and is cast of purest silver. It has strong magical connections to the Positive Material Plane.

In the hands of any lawful good creature, it functions as a +3 mace, +4 against all evil-aligned beings, doing double damage to undead creatures and creatures of the negative material planes. Three times per day, the mace can glow with a *shimmering light*, destroying all undead of less than mummy class within a 30′ radius, and doing 4d6 to mummies, 2d6 to vampires, and 1d6 to liches.

Evil characters touching the mace are automatically put under a *quest* to give the mace to the very next lawful good person that they find. Part of the quest enchantment is the ability to recognize the next truly pure-hearted person the wielder encounters.

Torshorak

Torshorak (a goblin word meaning "elf-cleaver") is a great ax, notched and nicked but still nasty-looking. It has no magical effects on non-elven characters, but in the hands of a person of lawful evil alignment it functions as a +2 weapon, +3 versus elves. When the owner is fighting an elf, he or she must save versus spells at -5 or go into a berserker rage (attacking 2 times per round, with +2 to-hit and damage). This weapon is thought to be in the hands of an evil warlord who leads goblin hordes.

Hadrion's Spear

Hadrion, a minor warlord, purchased a magical spear (+3) for an incredible price and had wizards imbue it with additional magic powers. It confers +2 AC, +1 on strength, and negates all surprise attacks including thief backstabbing abilities, warning its owner psychically of the danger as long as it is held in hand or is kept close to the body. Hadrion used the spear in all of his campaigns, and it is said to have been placed with his body in the family vaults.

MAGIC ARMOR

Rainbow Armor

Only a couple of suits of this incredible chainmail are known to exist, and those few are handed down from clan leader to successor. They are given by the Norse bridge guardian, Heimdall, to his followers for exceptional deeds performed in the god's name. The rainbow armor takes the form of multicolored, shimmering chainmail, enchanted to a bonus of +3. The armor glows with a radiance that illuminates a 20-foot surrounding area, negating magical darkness and the ability to hide in shadows. Even invisible objects are revealed within this radius by a thin aura of rainbow light that outlines them. The mail is extremely light, encumbering the wearer only as per elven chainmail.

Undead Armor

Created and once worn by the infamous Thorinex of Thessla, this suit of armor consists of bones from many creatures, bound together by ligaments and metal hinges to allow movement. It only can be safely worn by a lawful evil character. All others find it cannot be made to fit them, regardless of their size. It confers AC 3, and radiates a *protection from evil 10′ radius*. If worn by a cleric, it raises the individual's effective experience level by 2 in regard to turning/befriending undead only.

Kirith-Kanoi

This large, circular shield is fashioned of dark, dense wood with rough metal bands running across it. It confers +3 on AC for any user, but in the hands of a dwarf, its true magical power manifests itself. Carried by a dwarf, it acts as a *ring of spell turning*. Its name in dwarven means "The Bane of Magic." No one knows who made it or when it was made, but it has surfaced many times in dwarven legends under different names.

New Miscellaneous Magic Items

Okay, let's face it. There are magic junkies out there. Gold and gems are nice to have, but nothing beats that wonderful feeling of being told "Yes, you do detect magic."

Some players have a great deal of playing experience and have memorized all the magic items in the books. In order to make it interesting, new magic items can add zest to the life of the most blase character. As a DM, do you really want to hear "I've already got a *ring of feather falling*. Anybody want this one?" or "Oh, it's just another old *wand of paralyzation*."

Throw one of these items into your campaign next time you play and you'll be able to baffle even those players who have one of everything.

Prism of Distraction

When held in front of a non-magical light source (torch, bright sunlight, candle, etc.) this prism has a 50% chance to cause opponents to stop in their tracks and stare with fascination at the multicolored lights given off by it. When combined with a magical light source (*continual light*, magic lantern, etc.) the probability rises to 90%. It may be used once a day. If the light source is extinguished, the spell is broken. Saving throws versus spell apply.

Pillow (or Cushion) of Regeneration

Usually found mixed with bedclothes or on furniture, this magical cushion doubles the rate at which hit points are regained and cuts in half the time needed in rest to regain spells, etc. Time must be spent actually reclining against the cushion.

Wand of Burdening

This wand emits a grey beam up to a maximum range of ninety feet. Any creature struck by the beam, who fails to make a saving throw vs. wands, immediately feels as encumbered as if he is trying to carry 2,000 gp in addition to normally carried items.

Augricrone's Tablecloth

When shaken and spread, this tablecloth miraculously provides a fine feast: meats, cheeses, hot and cold dishes, exotic fruits, fine wines, breads, etc., a full banquet capable of serving 20. The food must be eaten immediately; it cannot be saved for later consumption, as it all vanishes after two hours. When finished, one may simply gather the edges and fold or store away. It can be used only once a day.

Silk Coverlet of Warmth

Although it appears as only a finely woven bedcovering of dazzling hue, this coverlet is capable of maintaining a comfortable temperature for sleeping even in the most extreme conditions of cold and wind. It is always large enough to spread over three human-sized individuals. It does not work if it is wrapped around a person. It must be spread out over someone on a horizontal surface.

Necklace of Night Seeing

This lovely artifact of elven manufacture is worthwhile as an ornament due to its beauty and intricate workmanship, but when worn it bestows elven night seeing ability (infravision) on those not normally able to see in the dark. Even a blind person could detect heat while wearing this necklace.

Mirror Lakes

Usually found in groups of three to eight (roll d6 + 2), these first appear as ordinary round or oval five-inch silver mirrors, suitable for vanity or cosmetic purposes. However, upon speaking the command word and flinging a mirror away from you, a small puddle of water appears where the mirror lands and expands until it fills a twenty-foot diameter area with a twenty-foot deep pond of water. (If the available space will not hold this volume of water, no pond will form at all.) This water is fit for drinking, bathing, drowning, retaining an aquatic captive — anything normal water can do. May be used singly or as a connected chain to form a waterway. To end the enchantment, one must dive into the pond's center and pick up the mirror. Within one round the water will then dry up. If the mirror is left alone, the water will remain for up to seven years before the magic in the mirror fades and the pond dries up on its own. If this happens, the mirror never can be used again.

Winch of Power

An intricate mechanical device three inches high with a loading capacity of 2,000 gp. It includes 100 feet of unbreakable thread and can be wound and unwound with thumb and forefinger, no matter how much weight is at the other end. The winch is set in place with a command word, and the command word is needed to remove the winch from its place.

Rod of Indestructibility

This three-foot-long, half-inch diameter rod resists almost any attempts to bend or break it. (DM may grant a 1 percent chance of breakage only if the rod is subjected to extreme forces driven by magical power.) This rod can be used to thrust into trap works or to stop a descending ceiling by wedging it against the floor. Oddly enough, the rod cannot be used as a weapon. Any blow struck with it does no damage whatsoever, despite its hefty feel and obvious durability.

Layne's Hammock

This item folds small enough to fit into a small pouch. When removed from the pouch, it may be tossed into the air with the command "anchor." This causes the hammock to expand and anchor itself in air, providing a comfortable bed for one. While a person is in the hammock, the air surrounding the hammock will be comfortable for sleeping or relaxing, no matter what the surrounding temperature. Once a person gets out of the hammock, it collapses and folds itself, ready to be replaced in the pouch.

Ring of Aquatic Depth Location

This allows one to figure the depth of any body of water at a given point by merely observing it while wearing the ring. If used while in the water or underwater, it will also tell the approximate location of the nearest land mass above the water line, be it a wall, beach, island, etc.

Kettle of Breathing

When invoked, this spouted copper kettle will begin within 1-10 segments to emit a stream of steam that negates the effects of poisonous clouds within a thirty-foot radius.

Gauntlets of Polishing

While wearing these gauntlets, an individual is able to clean and polish (thoroughly) any object made of metal in 1/10th the time normally needed. These gauntlets are highly prized by metalsmiths and invaluable for cleaning and drying armor before it rusts.

Shade of the Shadow

This interesting object is found stored in a three-foot tube. The shade itself unrolls to three feet wide and seven feet high and will adhere to the wall. Once a shadow of a person or creature is cast on the shade (stand facing the shade and place a bright light behind the individual) the shadow is capable of detaching itself from the person and performing simple deeds of movement and observation upon command of the person controlling the shade. The shadow moves along walls, but can go through doors and through walls upon command. The shadow has no physical properties or abilities and is resistant to both magical and weapon attacks. The shadow has an innate ability to cause fear in opponents when first observed (as *Fear*, 6th level). The shadow lasts for 1-6 rounds and can be cast once a day. If a person is killed while his shadow is detached, he becomes a *shade* as described in Monster Manual II.

Ladder of Climbing

When this small (three inch) platinum ladder is carried on the person of any individual, it increases by 50% that individual's chance of climbing any surface.

Grains of Discomfort

Found in pouches, these granules should be handled with gloves. Rumored to be a residue from certain dwarven mining practices, if a handful of this granular substance is hurled at an opponent (treat as a thrown weapon) and makes contact, the grains will work their way into the inner layer of clothing against the skin and in 1-4 turns and will cause such discomfort as to render the opponent incapable of continued fighting or action unless all garments are taken off and shaken. This is prized by dwarves for practical jokes on their companions.

Chair of the Ancestors

This miniature chair will grow on command into a full-size chair of finely carved wood. When sitting in the chair and invoking the command word, the person seated will be able to communicate with one of his deceased ancestors (of his choice). There is a 5% chance the chair won't work, 5% chance the chair will become confused and call upon someone else's ancestor, 10% chance the wrong ancestor is called upon and a 10% chance that if the ancestor is called upon by name, rather than relationship, a person matching the name but who is not a relative could be reached. Each ancestor may converse for 1-4 rounds. Deceased persons contacted in this manner know nothing of the world since their death, so it is quite possible that the ancestor invoked will not know the answer to a particular question.

Boots of Concealing

These knee high boots are capable of completely concealing up to five objects in each boot, each object being no more than three inches wide and twelve inches long. For example, each boot could conceal a dagger, a pouched set of thieves tools, a scroll, a vial, and a short wand, and no one who searches the individual wearing the boots could feel, see, or otherwise distinguish the hidden object as long as the boots are worn. In 30% of the cases, the boots will have heels with hidden compartments capable of concealing a few coins or gems, a small piece of jewelry, etc., with the same concealment abilities.

Kaylan's Wooden Tray

Upon command, this 8 ½ × 11 inch tray will burn as a normal small campfire for eight hours per day, capable of being used for cooking or warmth. It will extinguish on command and can be used indefinitely.

Chaplet of Creature Recognition

While this chaplet is worn, an individual has a 75% chance to recognize any creature or monster encountered and to know 1 to 4 facts about the creature or monster, even if there is no possible way anyone in the party has encountered the creature or monster before. The chaplet does not function against unique creatures created by magic, but does provide information about magical creatures where two or more exist.

Taryn's Tub

Although this item appears as an ordinary wooden bucket, when the command word is spoken it expands into a wooden tub filled with comfortably hot water capable of holding up to six people. 25% of the time, a wooden shelf also will appear attached to the tub that has chilled goblets of white wine resting on it. The tub shrinks back into a wooden bucket upon command.

Amulet of Amiability

This amulet of unassuming appearance emits a dweomer of magic, but there is no way to tell the exact effect of the amulet short of trying it on. Once the amulet is on, the wearer will be unable to take it off unless a *remove curse* or *dispel magic* is used. Any person wearing the amulet (regardless of race, class, or alignment) will become incredibly nice, kind, and thoughtful. While the wearer will not do anything to hurt himself, he will do everything in his power to help those around him and fall in with their suggestions. He will give away possessions, bestow spells freely, try to be friendly with everyone (even monsters), help others with camp chores, etc. He will be appalled at the thought of theft and refuse to take treasure that doesn't belong to him. He will not attack, and if confronted by a monster or a hostile party member, he will offer gifts and try to talk peace and explain to the attacker why everyone should live in love and peace and harmony.

Note that the amulet does not actually alter a person's alignment. It only forces them to act in a friendly, helpful manner despite their alignment. Their actions under this enchantment do not endanger their alignment in any way.

The amulet also functions to give a bonus of +7 to the existing armor class of the wearer and also gives a bonus of +7 to all saving throws. The wearer is further endowed with the ability to conjure up infinite quantities of chocolate chip cookies (6 at a time) and fresh flowers (a handful at a time) simply by concentrating.

Ring of Apathy

The curse upon this ring becomes apparent only when it is tried on, and the ring only can be removed by means normally used to rid oneself of a cursed item. The wearer becomes listless and can make no decisions, offer no opinions, and generally must reply to all questions with expressions of ennui such as "I don't care," "It doesn't matter," "It's all the same to me," etc. There is a 10% chance he won't even care to defend himself if attacked.

Bottle of Refreshment

This thick, transparent-greenish bottle has strange undecipherable runes on it in no known language and contains a brownish fluid that fizzes when the cork is pulled out. This stimulating beverage negates exhaustion, alleviates thirst, and increases strength by 1 for a period of 20-24 turns (1d4 +20). The bottle refills itself overnight if the cork is returned immediately to the empty bottle.

Buttercup's Bouquet

Buttercup, a charming and ingenious half-elf of the locksmith persuasion, was best known for her wit and ingenuity in the face of danger. She favored a device crafted specifically for her by an infatuated magic-using admirer. This device resembled a glorious blossom and was made to be worn on the lapel or in the hair. When a secret catch was pressed, a gaseous substance squirted forth blinding everyone within a 15-foot radius. Buttercup, of course, knew to keep her eyes closed. The fumes will dissipate immediately, but the blindness persists for 1-8 rounds per individual.

Boxes of Message Sending

Two to five of these 17 inch by 5 inch boxes can be found at a time, each with a red handle and a small swinging door. Every box is marked with a simple but unique symbol, found only on that specific box. Boxes may be placed in a stationary location anywhere in the world with a small package or message inserted through the swinging door. When the handle is pulled and the symbol of another box is concentrated upon, the message or package will disappear from the orignal box. It will then appear in the box selected within 1-4 days. The red handle on the outside of a box will move to the downward position and lock there whenever a message or package is received, until the item is removed.

Franklyn's Incredible Chariot

Although this appears to be an ordinary wooden chair, by sitting on it the user will be able to see seven gems inlaid in the right arm. These gems actually function as controls. The gems and their functions are as follows:
Emerald: Chair glides forward at the pace of a walking man
Ruby: Chair moves forward at the pace of a running man
Diamond: Chair reverses direction, turning to face the opposite way
Sapphire: Chair turns to the left
Topaz: Chair turns to the right
Peridot: Chair slows to next slower speed, from running to walking, from walking to stopped
Amethyst: Chair stops — instantly

All movements are silent. The chair functions best on level ground, slowing up as a man on foot would for rugged terrain and halting in areas where a man could not walk. It will bear burdens of up to 2,000 gp weight. ❑

The Living City

Angel

by Vince Garcia

"The Living City" is a continuing feature in the POLYHEDRON™ Newszine through which members can share their best fantasy city material with the rest of the Network. All submissions will eventually become part of TSR Inc.'s series of LIVING CITY fantasy play-aids. If you have a building, business, encounter, or personality that adds some spice to your campaign's "town business" we'd like to see it.

"Angel" Rockford

Male High Elf Magic-user/Thief (9/9)

STR: 16
INT: 18
WIS: 10
DEX: 18
CON: 16
CHA: 7
COM: 8
AC Normal: −2
AC Rear: 2
Hit Points: 46
Alignment: Chaotic Neutral (Good tendencies)
Age: 350
Weapon Proficiencies (magic-user): Staff
Weapon Proficiencies (thief): Dagger, Sap, Garrot, Sling
Special Abilities: Bowyer/Fletcher; Foraging; Forgery; Gem Cutter, Thieving Skills
Languages: Common, Thieves Cant, Elvish Languages
Spells/day: 4 3 3 2 1

Thief Skills:

PP	OL	FT	MS	HS	HN	CW	RL
85	72	65	85	76	35	98	45

Spell Book:

Cantrips

Color
Gather
Palm
Clean
Stitch
Distract
Polish
Present
Dusty

Level 1 Spells

Friends
Charm Person
Shocking Grasp
Grease
Read Magic
Sleep
Dancing Lights
Ventriloquism
Unseen Servant

Level 2 Spells

ESP
Knock
Fool's Gold
Audible Glamer

Level 3 Spells

Fly
Slow
Lightning Bolt
Suggestion

Level 4 Spells

Confusion
Polymorph Self
Dimension Door

Level 5 Spells

Passwall
Telekinesis

Magic items: *Portable hole, wand of fire* (45 charges), *girdle of hill giant strength* (works 10 rounds per day), *bracers of defense AC 2, ring of invisibility, rod of beguiling* (21 charges), *short bow +1, short sword +2*

History: No one knows how Angel came to Ravens Bluff. The most common story is that he was deported here from Procampur. (Although another tale is that he followed his friend "Jimmy" here, and has been unable to locate him.) One of the city's most unforgettable characters, Angel, despite the fact he appears to be a cowardly and untrustworthy drunkard, is perhaps one of the most consummate thieves in the city. With his arsenal of magic-user spells and cantrips to back up his thieving abilities, there is no building or treasure safe from him. Fortunately for society, however, Angel keeps his thievery low-key, being satisfied with filching a few gold pieces here and there while looking for someone to latch onto as a meal ticket. He is a stringer for Nazier, guildmaster over the city's most powerful thieves' guild, and recruits thieves new to the area (for which he is paid 1 gp per head).

Despite obvious appearances, Angel deep inside (way deep) actually has some good in him, and is basically a product of a society that hates him. He once was a spy for a good king, and was superb at the job, showing uncommon valor and bravery a number of times. He won a medal for these deeds, which he treasures and keeps tucked secretly away. If someone someday is able to see past his wretched condition, he may discover a valuable acquaintance who can use stealth like few others.

Appearance: Angel's curly hair and scraggly black beard (courtesy of his cantrips) make him look like a human rather than an elf. He is always attired in a dirty red robe, a blue cloak, and a turban.

Activities: Angel can be found just about anyplace in the city lacking vigilant law enforcement. Most often, he will try panhandling a "loan" and make a nuisance of himself to player characters as he seeks a mentor who will pay for his upkeep (10 gp/week) and be satisfied with getting little in return. Those who give him something to get rid of him will find he keeps coming back. He can, however, be counted on to obtain information from the city's underground. Angel also can obtain forged documents, but for a hefty price. Angel explains that he'll need plenty of money for bribes, then pockets at least half the money.

Scams: Player characters might also run into Angel when he runs one of his many scams. Several of these are outlined below:

1. When observing a character gambling in a crowd, he approaches and whispers that he thinks "That guy who just walked out the door looked like he pickpocketed you. You better check your purse to make sure your money's there." If the PC produces a purse and checks, Angel apologizes, saying he was wrong. He then turns to leave, activating one or two *present* cantrips and gaining up to 12 of the PC's coins from his purse before making good his escape.

2. Having purchased a ragged and used tapestry for a gold piece, Angel uses *clean, color,* and *stitch* cantrips to make it look like a new 20 gp tapestry. He offers to sell it for 5 gp. If the party buys

(Continued on page 31)

New Rogues Gallery

Hodgepodge

by Dr. Edward R. Friedlander, Costa Valhouli, and Stephen Wales

"The New Rogues Gallery" is a continuing feature in POLYHEDRON™ Newszine through which members may share their most interesting characters with the rest of the Network. Referees can use some or all of the characters described here for random encounters, or even build whole adventures around them. The Newszine welcomes all member contributions to this feature.

This installment of "The New Rogues Gallery" is the Newszine's first truly international feature. It includes small submissions from members in the USA; Dr. Edward R. Friedlander of Johnson City, TN (Li Po) and Costa Valhouli of Bradford, MA (Mervic, Thorym, Niatara, and Lirana) and overseas, Stephen Wales of Queensland, Australia (Silverleaf).

Silverleaf

Male Gray Elf Magic-User/Thief 12/10

STR: 12
INT: 19
WIS: 9
DEX: 18
CON: 13
CHA: 16
COM: 14
AC Normal: −2
AC Rear: 2
Hit Points: 37
Alignment: Chaotic Neutral
Age: 1356
Weapon Proficiencies (magic-user): Dagger, Dart
Weapon Proficiencies (thief): Long Sword, Short Bow, Sling
Special Abilities: 90% resistance to sleep and charm spells, +1 "to hit" when using long sword or bow, infravision to 60 feet, detect secret doors 2 chances in 6 and concealed doors 3 chances in 6, when alone surprise monsters 4 chances in 6 unless passing through a portal (then 3 chances in 6).
Languages: Common, Elvish, Gnome, Halfling, Goblin, Hobgoblin, Orcish, Gnoll, Chaotic Neutral

Spells/day: 4 4 4 4 4 1

Thief Skills:

PP	OL	FT	MS	HS	HN	CW	RL
95	77	70	93	83	35	99	50

Spell Book:

Level 1 Spells

Enlarge
Burning Hands
Fire Water
Identify
Magic Missile
Find Familiar
Tenser's Floating Disc
Read Magic
Feather Fall
Unseen Servant

Level 2 Spells

Wizard Lock
Stinking Cloud
Knock
Rope Trick
Tasha's Uncontrollable Hideous Laughter
Fool's Gold
Detect Invisibility
Invisibility

Level 3 Spells

Hold Person
Slow
Dispel Magic
Melf's Minute Meteors
Lightning Bolt
Suggestion
Fireball
Phantasmal Force

Level 4 Spells

Ice Storm
Polymorph Other
Fire Shield
Wizard Eye
Evard's Black Tentacles
Dimension Door
Wall of Fire
Wall of Ice
Polymorph Self

Level 5 Spells

Wall of Stone
Dismissal
Contact Other Plane
Conjure Elemental
Magic Jar

Level 6 Spells

Geas
Disintegrate

Equipment: *Bracers of defense AC 4, ring of protection +2, ring of fire resistance, long sword +3, 13 sling bullets +1, rope of climbing, wand of magic missiles* (33 charges), dagger, sling, short bow, 2 quivers with 20 arrows each, 50′ rope, 10′ pole.

Appearance: Silverleaf is 5′2″ tall and weighs 102 pounds. His hair is silvery-white and his eyes are radiant green. He is quite ancient even in elven terms. His features clearly show his age, as his last 500 years have been spent researching how to remove his curse (see below), and the strain is plain for all to see. He usually wears a plain brown robe with a hood pulled up over his aged visage.

Background: Silverleaf was a bit of a rogue from the day he was born. Coming from the faerie race of gray elves, his choice of ethics (chaos and neutrality) surprised many. He has a long, colorful past. While still a young, adventuresome elf of middle ability, he and his companions went to plunder the tomb of a long dead wizard. After much struggle, the party found the arch mage's tomb. Inside, they found a sarcophagus with a bejeweled scepter atop it. Feeling bold, young Silverleaf foolishly decided to race forward and grab the scepter, hoping to gain some incredible boon or power. He got a powerful curse instead. Ever since that day, there has been a 15% chance that each spell he casts will fail, and of those, 10% have a reversed or other baneful effect. Though the chance of mishap is small, the curse has brought harm and embarrassment to Silverleaf on many occasions. Most recently, he wanted to give up adventuring and settle down to enjoy his declining years. As a last effort, he thought that he would *geas* some poor fool into helping him remove his curse. Unfortunately, the *geas* reversed and he has compelled himself to find a way to remove the curse. Many powerful spell casters have tried to help him, all to no avail. Recently he has taken up residence in Ravens Bluff.

Silverleaf has grown a trifle senile. He is not as quick witted as he was a couple of centuries ago, though his experience may come in handy on adventures. He is usually kind, but those who offend him had best watch their backs, as his thieving skills still operate at 100% efficiency. He does not use his magic very often, except for information-gathering spells, although he does carry a couple of attack spells for emergencies.

Silverleaf lives at the Magic-Users

Guild of Ravens Bluff where there is plenty of opportunity to continue his research into ancient curses. Occasionally he can be found at the Thieves Guild practicing his skills, or in a tavern or near the city gates looking for a new adventuring party to come with him on an adventure. When approaching a party he explains that he wants their company "On a quest of a magnitude so immense it is mind shattering." If the party shows any interest at all, he tells them anything to get them to come along. If he is refused, Silverleaf often follows adventurers and tries to *geas* them into helping him, using an "accidental" bump in the street to cover the touch needed to complete the spell. He usually removes the *geas* after one adventure.

Li Po

12th Level Male Human Cleric

STR: 16
INT: 8
WIS: 18
DEX: 13
CON: 14
CHA: 10
COM: 11
AC Normal: 7
AC Rear: 7
Hit Points: 45
Alignment: Lawful Good
Age: 43
Weapon Proficiencies: Sap, Lasso, Staff
Special Abilities: Animal Trainer (cat), Healing, Calligraphy
Languages: Common, Lawful Good
Spells/day: 8 7 6 4 2 2
Equipment: *Ring of protection +3*

Appearance: Li Po is 5′ 6″ tall and weighs 142 pounds. He shaves his head, making it difficult to say what his hair color really is, but his eyebrows are black, frosted with a touch of gray. His eyes are brown. Li Po usually wears a tattered, shapeless robe of unbleached wool and goes bareheaded and barefoot whenever practical. He wears no armor and usually carries no weapons.

Background: As a young idealist, Li Po adventured as a player character in several AD&D® game campaigns, hoping to bring peace and understanding to worlds torn by strife. Much to his sorrow, he learned that most evil creatures can only understand the power of goodness when it is backed by force of arms. Li Po also recognized that adventuring would soon make him as fierce and hotheaded as his associates. Broken hearted, he retired to the forest as a simple hermit, and adopted the name of a legendary oriental poet. He tries to help all who visit him, no matter what their alignment.

As a PC, Li Po was a standard cleric, but in some campaigns, he might be an oriental *shukenja.*

Li Po likes company. He admires those whose learning and cleverness exceed his own modest accomplishments. He usually asks guests about their adventures, and what each wants out of life. He will be happy to cure a party in exchange for their promise to contribute to any good-aligned church charity. If there is a chance of promoting peace and increasing understanding between enemies, Li Po will volunteer his informational spells as well. He will never try to force his personal faith on anyone else.

Li Po is especially tender toward animals. He is always guarded by at least two full-sized tigers which are utterly devoted to him. One of these always will be awake. It is 50% likely that there also will be cubs. If for some reason there is a fight, the tigers will strike to subdue. Several nightingales also make their homes near his hut.

Li Po will be happy to teach PC shukenjas and good clerics three new spells that promote communication and understanding.

Li Po's Speak With Undead (Alteration)
Level: 3 — Components: V, S
Range: 30′ — Casting time: 1 segment
Duration: 4 rounds + 1 round/level — Saving Throw: None
Area of effect: 60-foot sphere

Undead within the area of effect cannot attack the caster. This protection is negated if the caster attacks, attempts to cast another spell, or tries to turn the undead. The caster can talk freely with any undead within the area of effect, even those without intelligence. The undead must tell who they were in life, how they became undead, and what control they may have over other undead. Skeletons and zombies will reveal who has animated them. Other controlled undead must tell everything they know about their oppressors. If the cleric chooses to attack by any other means, the undead get one free attack round first. Intelligent undead may attempt deception or refuse to answer. In oriental campaign worlds with few undead, the spell will enable a shukenja to speak freely with certain unfriendly kamis, at the DM's discretion.

Li Po's Parley (Alteration)
Level: 4 — Components: V
Range: 4″ + 1″/level — Casting time: 1 turn
Duration: 4 rounds + 1 round/level — Saving Throw: None
Area of effect: 40-foot cube

This spell is intended to prevent misunderstandings and promote cooperation among creatures from diverse backgrounds. All creatures in the area of effect can *comprehend languages, speak with animals,* and *know alignment,* and are able to converse freely. If *detect lie* is cast concurrently, those taking part in the *parley* cannot deceive one another. Most evil dungeon dwellers have nothing to discuss with player characters.

Li Po's Paper Messenger: (Alteration)
Level: 4 — Components: V, S, M
Range: Special — Casting time: 1 turn
Duration: Special — Saving throw: None
Area of effect: Special

The cleric writes a message on a piece of paper, folds it into the form of some creature (origami bird, dragon, animal, etc.), and throws it. The paper creature will come to life (size remains unaltered) and go to the intended recipient, unless obstructed or intercepted, regardless of form; it can climb, burrow, or swim, and if winged, fly. The creature moves at the same speed as the normal creature, or slower if the cleric desires. The creature will find the intended recipient, unless concealed by magic, and revert to paper form to deliver the message. If a *prayer* is spoken over the paper the creature can speak the message in a language understood by the caster (caster's choice). If a *tongues* spell is also cast, the creature can deliver the message in any language.

Mervic

14th level Male Human Magic-User

STR: 14
INT: 18
WIS: 17
DEX: 16
CON: 12
CHA: 14
COM: 13

AC Normal: −2
AC Rear: 0
Hit Points: 39
Alignment: Lawful Neutral
Age: 46
Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger, Dart, Staff
Languages: Common, Lawful Neutral, Elvish, Dwarvish, Gnome, Gold Dragon, Silver Dragon
Spells/day: 5 5 5 4 4 2 1

Spell Book:

Level 1 Spells

Charm Person
Fire Water
Identify
Magic Missile
Jump
Find Familiar
Read Magic
Feather Fall
Hold Portal

Level 2 Spells

ESP
Knock
Mirror Image
Detect Invisibility
Invisibility
Rope Trick

Level 3 Spells

Clairvoyance
Fly
Dispel Magic
Lightning Bolt
Explosive Runes
Fireball

Level 4 Spells

Wall of Ice
Polymorph Other
Minor Globe of Invulnerability
Confusion
Wall of Fire

Level 5 Spells

Cone of Cold
Teleport
Magic Jar
Passwall
Wall of Force

Level 6 Spells

Death Spell
Anti-Magic Shell
Enchant an Item

Level 7 Spells
Limited Wish
Equipment: *Dagger of venom* (filled with sleep poison), *staff +3, wand of fire* (64 charges), *pouch of accessibility, eyes of infravision, potion of extra-healing, boots of elvenkind, ring of regeneration,* 3 vials of sleep poison (1 each contact, ingestive, insinuative)

Appearance: Mervic is 5′ 10″ tall and weighs 144 pounds. He has long black hair and a long black beard shot through with gray. He prefers dressing himself in traditional wizard's clothes: dark robes, cape, and cowl.

Background: Mervic has been adventuring for as long as he has lived. He is the son of two well-known adventurers, Jallei and Thrythelm. His parents mysteriously vanished when he was nine, and a neighbor took him in and enrolled him in a school of magic. He was an exceptional pupil, and quickly learned his art. He has adventured with many bands, but his last expedition ended after encountering Juiblex. Juiblex's material form was destroyed and the demon banished to the Abyss, but the entire party was irrevocably killed except for Mervic, who survived, and Thorym, who was revivifiable. Since then, Mervic has been considering plans to slay Juiblex permanently, while Juiblex keeps a wary eye on the mage.

Mervic owns a large fortress hidden in the Crystalmist mountains (in the WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ Fantasy Setting). He spends most of his non-adventuring time there, studying magic and enchanting new items. It is rumored that he has another citadel on the Astral Plane, and Mervic neither confirms nor denies this. He is very well known among fellow magic-users and has honorary membership in wizards guilds through the Flanaess.

Mervic usually keeps to himself, but never lets an affront go unpunished. (He usually fries the offender with a well-placed fireball.)

Thorym

9th level Male Human Fighter

STR: 18/87
INT: 12
WIS: 12
DEX: 15
CON: 16
CHA: 13
COM: 14
AC Normal: −4
AC Rear: −1
Hit Points: 86
Alignment: Neutral Good
Age: 32
Weapon Proficiencies: Battle Axe (specialist), Spear, Long Sword, Long Bow, Flail, Hand Axe
Languages: Common, Neutral Good
Equipment: *Full plate armor +2, shield +1, battle axe +1, long bow +1*

Appearance: Thorym is 6′ 5″ tall and weighs 275 pounds. He is heavily muscled, and has long black hair, blazing blue eyes, and lightly tanned skin.

Background: Thorym is an ex-mercenary warrior who hopes to gain exceptional wealth and honor through adventuring. He plans to build a stronghold and attract followers with the treasure he gains. He strongly dislikes thieves, but tolerates Niatara because of her magic, charm, and good looks. Thorym was part of Mervic's original adventuring group. He is loyal, and will fight to the death to protect any party he is with. If at least one person survives, Thorym reasons, the survivor will see to it that he is raised.

Niatara

Female High Elf Magic-User/Thief 7/7

STR: 13
INT: 17
WIS: 13
DEX: 16
CON: 9
CHA: 17
COM: 21
AC Normal: 5
AC Rear: 7
Hit Points: 32
Alignment: Neutral Good
Age: 182
Weapon Proficiencies (magic-user): Staff, Dart
Weapon Proficiencies (thief): Long sword, Short Bow, Short Sword
Special Abilities: 90% resistance to sleep and charm spells, +1 "to hit" when using long sword and short bow, infravision to 60 feet, detect secret doors 2 chances in 6 and concealed doors 3 chances in 6, when alone surprise monsters 4 chances in 6 unless passing through a portal (then 3 chances in 6).
Languages: Common, Elvish, Gnome, Halfling, Goblin, Hobgoblin, Orcish, Gnoll, Dwarvish, Neutral Good
Spells/day: 4 3 2 1

Thief Skills:

PP	OL	FT	MS	HS	HN	CW	RL
65	52	50	60	53	30	94	35

Spell Book

Cantrips

Spill
Change
Belch
Bluelight
Wilt
Mute
Hairy
Smokepuff

(Continued on page 30)

Great Familiars

And a Few Great Tales

by Vince Garcia

Somewhat low in spells, a group of adventurers have decided to try a shortcut down an unexplored hallway to exit a dungeon. As they move confidently along the lengthy corridor, the halfling scout returns with news that up ahead he has discovered a guardroom occupied by human men-at-arms.

Further interrogation of the halfling suggests to the group that the hall at that point may be just wide enough for all to sneak past unnoticed, especially as the guards appear to be exceptionally lax in their duties today. And so, satisfied with the treasure thus far gained, the party opts to attempt a sneak-by of the guardroom rather than engage in a potentially tough fight.

At first, all goes well. The halfling and two fighters slip past, praying their armor doesn't clank. Fortunately, the guards are too busy in a card game to notice anything. Now it only remains for the magic-user and druid to follow.

For a moment, it looks like success is assured. But just as the magic-user passes the doorway, his imp familiar ceases its quiet snoring as it is jostled awake. A moment later, a tiny sombrero attached to a small, green head pokes from the magic-user's backpack. Eyeing the party sleepily the imp is confused. This group rarely moves so stealthily. Something must be up.

Suddenly, the stillness of the hallway is shattered by a thickly-accented voice crying out: "Hey, you guys — how come you're being so quiet?!"

One aspect of role playing overlooked by most players and DMs alike is the potential for interesting personalities amongst the PCs' familiars. After all, familiars are more than just pets — each is abnormally intelligent, acting as a special companion and assistant to its master.

It therefore follows that each should have its own personality, making it distinct from other familiars of the same type, even as the traits of its master or mistress are uniquely different from other spellcasters of the same class.

For example, there was Abdul, the turbaned pseudo-dragon, who faithfully spread a prayer rug thrice daily for 10 minutes of meditation regardless of where the party was or what it was doing.

Once left behind in a dungeon because of his master's poorly worded wish, Abdul had to fight through or sneak past almost 20 rooms before emerging outside, wounded but alive. A few days later, he was reunited with his master, whose joy at seeing Abdul was somewhat dimmed after being told by the disgruntled pseudo-dragon that only a pilgrimage to a holy shrine a continent away would suffice as atonement for Abdul's undeserved experience.

Thus was begun a two-year campaign, which took the party through the Desert of Desolation series of modules, culminating with the PCs saving the world and Abdul becoming sheik of a tribe of nomads.

The parting of Abdul and his master, by mutual consent, was not without ceremony. Abdul declared a week-long feast for the group, and his parting gift to his master was a *ring of wizardry*, an item he'd picked up during his escape from the dungeon two years earlier.

Or there was the shining hour of Lawrence the frog, familiar to Clarissa, a 12th level magic-user, who as a result of a fiendish use of a vanish spell found herself in a prison complex surrounded by armed guards. Quickly stripped of all useful items, she was gagged, chained to a wall, and informed her fate was to be sacrificed to an evil god at midnight. With that happy knowledge, the door to her cell was locked and guards posted outside to keep an eye on her.

Lawrence, meanwhile, had slipped out of his mistress' backpack and hidden himself in her cell, beneath a pile of straw. When after a time her guards became engrossed in a card game, Lawrence made his move. Hopping upon Clarissa's shoulder, he began gnawing on the linen gag, soon loosening it. Clarissa, now able to cast spells with only verbal components, disappeared from view a moment later.

As her startled guards rushed to the cell to see what had become of their prisoner, Clarissa finished them off with a *cloudkill* from atop the stairs she'd moved to via *dimension door*.

Quickly retrieving her gear, she exited the detention area into the main temple complex, hitting the roof with a *transmute rock to mud* spell, burying alive the high priest and a score of acolytes as they prepared the altar for sacrifice.

Satisfied, she used a *teleport* scroll to get home, whereupon she kissed Lawrence for his splendid performance.

Imagine her surprise when Lawrence

the frog turned into Lawrence the prince! For, as it turned out, Lawrence had fallen under the curse of an evil witch whose affections he had spurned years earlier. Polymorphed into a frog, he had been waiting for an unsolicited kiss from a maiden to restore him to his true form. To make a long story short, Clarissa, who had been considering retirement, became princess of a neighboring country, and has lived almost happily ever after, as the saying goes.

But by far the most unforgettable familiar I have yet come across is the renowned Jose', the imp. The continuing saga of Jose' and his "master" Gith, a magic-user of questionable alignment, has become legend throughout several campaigns, and none who have ever encountered the pair have ever forgotten them (no matter how hard they've tried).

To begin with, Gith is a magic-user of imposing stature, almost seven feet tall. While he lacks the genius intelligence of some of his contemporaries, he makes up for it with an 18 strength and superior constitution.

Just how he acquired Jose' — or why — has been and continues to be a mystery to his fellow adventurers (Gith has remained strangely silent on the subject). Jose' just seemed to be there after he'd reached 6th level.

Introducing himself with a bow and a sweep of his sombrero, the imp wasted little time in getting friendly with the other party members, especially the female druid.

"Hi, honey — how 'bout a kiss!"

It didn't take long for the group to discover that Jose' was going to be irreplaceable. He quickly showed in several areas just how useful he could be. His natural ability to detect magic freed spellcasters from loading spells of the same.

"Hey, man — dat arrow dat got t'rough your *protection from normal missiles* was magic!"

Jose' proved himself to be a shrewd negotiator with monsters of the same general ilk, allowing opportunities to parley rather than mindlessly rush in to attack.

"Hey, beholder — how 'bout insteada us givin' you a magic item to pass, you give us everyt'ing you got so we don't kill you..."

The power to detect good many a time alerted his master to the presence of potential enemies.

"Hey, paladin, don't give me no dirty look or my master's gonna show you what he's made of!"

Yes, it's true that the patience of the party has grown a bit thin with the loveable imp at times. One of his more memorable escapades occurred during the group's return to town after a moderately successful dungeon adventure. A new tax had been levied in their absence, and Jose' was appalled it should apply to "his" group. He therefore wasted no time in letting the gate constabulary know his feelings on the subject.

"Hey, man — we ain't gonna pay your king's stinking tax. If he wants it, tell him to come and collect it!"

The Inn of the Seven Deadly Sins is one of the more inexpensive purveyors of lodgings in one of the less affluent sections of the city. Several thousand gold pieces' worth of taxes and penalties later, the adventurers were on their way here instead of their usual haunt, the Raven's Inn, on the other side of town.

Arriving without being pickpocketed or backstabbed, everyone sat down at a relatively clean table and ordered an inexpensive meal — except Jose'.

"I'll have steamed lobster wit' cracked crab on d' side, and some Dom Perignon 'fifty-seven, too."*

Jose' insisted on overseeing the preparation of the food since, he claims, he is a culinary expert. And so the precocious imp wandered back to the kitchen to be chased out a minute later by a hurled meat cleaver.

Dinner came and went with no one noticing an assassin in a corner giving the group the evil eye as Jose' picked his teeth with a +1 dagger that looked suspiciously like the one which had disappeared from the assassin's boot while the assassin's eyes had been glued to a barmaid doing a striptease.

As circumstances turned out, there were only four rooms available for the five people (or so druid Lydia claimed on her return from the registration desk). And so, almost unanimously, it was decided that Gith should stay down the block at the Final Rest Hotel while the remainder bedded down where they were.

Somewhat less pleased, Gith gathered his pack and left with Jose' in tow.

Always one with a keen sense of danger, Gith paused outside and looked up and down the street.

"I don't like this part of town," he said to Jose'. "Go invisible, get on my shoulder and watch my back."

"Okay, man," Jose' answered, and willingly complied.

Of course the assassin followed the confident Gith — and down the block backstabbed him for eight points of damage. Jose' immediately lunged (to safety), calling out, "Hey, man, some dude just hit you from behind!"

Resorting to the basest form of combat, Gith drew his dagger and a fierce knife fight ensued, while Jose' roamed the gathering crowd, taking bets on the fight and holding the money in his sombrero.

As it had so many times before, Gith's 18 strength came through for him, and the assassin slumped dead after six rounds of combat.

"Any of you other dudes wanna mix it up wit' my master?" Jose' dared the crowd.

No one did, and after paying off Jose's gambling debts, Gith arrived at the Final Rest Hotel.

Safely behind the locked door of his room, Gith grabbed Jose' by the throat.

"Hey, man, you're choking me!" Jose' gasped.

"I told you to watch my back" Gith hissed.

"I did, man," Jose' protested. "I watched it real good! I didn't take my eyes off your back once."

Early the next morning, Gith checked out of the hotel, leaving Jose' snoring loudly in the bed. After rejoining the group and begging some healing from the druid, he urged a quick departure from the city. And so the party left town and headed for the dungeon a few leagues away.

This expedition seemed to go unusually smoothly, and after spending a night in the dungeon, the party re-emerged from the entrance a few thousand gold and a few magic items richer. And who was waiting for them? You guessed it.

Perched atop the shoulder of an orc chieftain at the head of his tribe was Jose', waving happily. Jumping down, he ran to Gith and took his place at his shoulder.

"Hey, man," he said, giving Gith a warty, green kiss, "you guys forgot me at d'hotel, and I hadda promise dis tribe o' fifty orcs dat you'd pay dem for escorting me back safe to you, man."

Back at the Inn of the Seven Deadly Sins, the party split what was left of the treasure. As fate would have it, one of the magic items was a scroll which would gain a cleric or druid a familiar.

Jose' looked up and grinned at Lydia.

* Familiars have to eat, too, it should be remembered.

"Go ahead, honey, do it!"

She sold the scroll.

Much too often, familiars are taken for granted in the campaign. One way to end that is to view these creatures as former humanoids reincarnated by their deities into lower life forms as punishment for some misdeed in a previous life. Because of this, familiars can enjoy some interesting personality traits that can liven up the game.

One method for determining the quirky personalities of familiars is for the DM to come up with his own concept for the familiars, based on the type of familiar and its personality that he feels would help the character remain true to its alignment or provide the player with amusement. This was the case with Lawrence the frog.

In a campaign where the gamers are superior role-players, the DM may consider allowing the player to create the personality concept of the familiar as long as it does not gratuitously meld with the character's persona.

Lastly, a random method may be used with the traits table for NPCs on page 100 of the Dungeon Masters Guide. The tables I have found most useful for this are the general tendencies, personality, disposition, nature, bravery, and interests.

As an example, here are two familiars which were created through this method:

Name:	Jose'	Abdul
Species:	Imp	Pseudo-dragon
Alignment:	Lawful evil	Chaotic good
General Tendencies:	Capricious	Precise
Personality:	Egoist/ arrogant	Diplomatic
Disposition:	Proud /haughty	Even tempered
Nature:	Jealous	Hard-hearted
Bravery:	Foolhardy	Fearless
Interests:	Foods /preparation	Religion

Alignment, naturally, should be the ultimate criterion for flavoring the various personality traits of the familiar, and should be kept in mind by the DM.

Familiars are not necessarily restricted to magic-users. The Monster Manual seems to suggest that some clerics may receive familiars; and when magical devices, such as a book of infinite spells are considered, virtually any character class conceivably may gain a familiar.

The term "familiar" also can be broadened to include any intelligent companion acquired by a PC during the course of adventuring from Ranger Arathorn's pixie to Gorff the dwarf's baby galeb duhr.

Certainly in our own campaigns, we all have seen an increased rapport with our familiars not previously experienced, so much so that in one game druid Lydia, mentioned earlier, actually paid for a *raise dead* spell in the hope of restoring to life her brick-throwing pet rat, Ignatz (slain by a fireball). He now lies entombed in a marble crypt, and Lydia has been searching for a wish to bring him back ever since.

In closing, I'll confess what some of you no doubt have guessed, Gith is my character, and I'm the one stuck with Jose'.

So the next time Adrienne the prestidigitator casts a *find familiar* spell and a muscle-bound brownie steps out of the forest, calling "Yo, Adrienne!" — watch out. ❑

New Rogues Gallery
(Continued from page 27)

Level 1 Spells

Charm Person	*Unseen Servant*
Fire Water	*Read Magic*
Identify	*Enlarge*
Magic Missile	

Level 2 Spells

Web	*Detect Invisibility*
Levitate	*Strength*

Level 3 Spells

Fly	*Suggestion*
Fireball	

Level 4 Spells

Dimension Door *Polymorph Self*

Equipment: *Potion of diminution, wand of illusion* (33 charges), *wand of frost* (21 charges), *dagger +2, hat of disguise, potion of gaseous form,* backpack with false bottom

Appearance: Niatara is 5′ 6″ tall and weighs 115 pounds. She has slightly curly, long golden hair. Her complexion is tanned, and her eyes are green. She is exceptionally beautiful.

Background: Niatara is an accomplished thief/sorceress who has a flair for using magic in unusual ways, often for practical jokes. She likes to use her *hat of disguise* to reduce her comeliness and avoid unwanted attention, She gets good mileage out of *polymorph self,* often turning into a small animal, such as a house cat, in order to enter a place she would not normally be able to. When faced with great danger, she might shrink to a very small size with a reversed *enlarge* spell or *potion of diminution,* then hide in her backpack's secret compartment, or she might use her *unseen servant* to carry her reduced form to a safe place.

Lirana

9th level Female Human Cleric

STR: 15
INT: 13
WIS: 18
DEX: 14
CON: 14
CHA: 13
COM: 15
AC Normal: 1
AC Rear: 1
Hit Points: 64
Alignment: Lawful Good
Age: 29
Weapon Proficiencies: Club, Mace, Flail, Staff
Languages: Common, Lawful Good, Elvish, Dwarf, Gnome
Spells/day: 6 6 4 3 1
Equipment: *Plate Mail +2, footman's mace +2, girdle of fire giant strength, staff of curing* (8 charges), *potion of healing* (x2)
Appearance: Lirana is 5′ 4″ tall and weighs 124 pounds. Her hair is long and reddish brown. Her eyes sparkle like two emeralds, and her skin is pale and freckled.

Background: Lirana was born near Westkeep (in the Hold of the Sea Princes), but moved north to join the following of Fharlanghn. In keeping with her religion, she prefers to adventure and spread the worship of her deity instead of tending a temple. She is extroverted, very talkative, and skilled in healing. She does enjoy smashing monsters in hand to hand combat, however, and does so every chance she gets. She particularly dislikes demons and devils, and can't wait to fight Juiblex sometime. This ambition brought her to Mervic's attention. ❑

Letters
(Continued from page 5)

believe rather than vote to please peers who might have access to the voting tally. This ensures that the votes are assigned by merit instead of being assigned to avoid confrontations.

Once HQ receives tournament results, they are entered into a computer which assigns each player and judge points according to a confidential formula. The formula will remain unrevealed because in the past, when the formula was published, people manipulated it. When abuse occurs, checks and balances must be implemented to stop it. Something very like your suggestion about ranking players in the same manner as judges is already part of the system. Lines A-F on the voting sheet translate directly into points for the players mentioned there. Participation still counts for something, and the judges rate each team's performance as a group, so it's enitirely possible to lose and not take a beating on points.

Throughout this process the only people with discretion are the judge and the players. HQ makes no decisions about players' point totals or advancements except when irregularities or disputes arise — sometimes problems require the application of authority. If there are no problems, HQ follows the results on the scoring sheets to the letter. Similarly, there are fixed formulas for awarding service points. There is a formula which determines the point award for each service, such as writing tournaments. The Notes From HQ column in issue #41 has a list of service award categories. The exact point awards for each service remain unrevealed because we want people to offer services out of a genuine desire to serve the Network. Services are not worth as many points as playing or judging tournaments, however, so service points are not likely to cause point inflation or give any member an unfair advantage over another.

A Matter of Priorities

In recent years, the emphasis of the RPGA™ Network has been on providing materials for tournaments. While this certainly is not a bad thing, I feel that the focus of the RPGA Network needs to change. I would like to suggest that the RPGA Network shift its emphasis away from tournaments. In order of importance, I believe that the following comprises a direction most advantageous to all members of the Network.

1. The POLYHEDRON™ Newszine. I feel the POLYHEDRON should be of primary importance to the RPGA Network staff. You are not doing anyone a service with slow production of the POLYHEDRON Newszine. Take the classified ads for example. If ever there was a case of perishable information, it is here.

Continue to have members submit encounters, NPCs, magic items, spell descriptions, rules ideas, etc. These features, along with the letters column, are the real "meat" of the Newszine, as I see it.

Encourage Network members who have had their work rejected by DRAGON® Magazine and DUNGEON® Magazine to rewrite their submission and resubmit it to the POLYHEDRON Newszine. I am certain you will receive many responses.

Let's face facts. Not every issue of the POLYHEDRON Newszine needs a module. A revision of a set of rules, a new character class, or something along that line would be more than acceptable.

2. Special projects. By this, I mean projects along the line of The Living City. Development of the RPGA's section of the Forgotten Realms could be enacted under this field. Why stop with The Living City?

3. Tournaments and special events. You say that you have a problem writing tournaments for various events. Try recycling your tournaments.

Consider mixing the races of the people in your artwork. Many people of many races belong to the RPGA Network.

Eric Scott Vaughn
Camp Smith, HI

While HQ might have spent too much time on tournaments in the past, that hasn't been the case in the past year. We have brought the Newszine back on schedule from a seven issue deficit, and as this month's "Notes From HQ" points out, we're planning Newszines up to a year in advance. POLYHEDRON™ Newszine is HQ's number one priority.

This, however, does not solve everybody's problems. Classifieds, for example, must now be submitted three months in advance to allow for production and mailing time (convention announcements require six months lead time). Also, we cannot guarantee that classifieds or convention listings will be published — space for these items is allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Other readers have requested that we run shorter modules, and we are complying. Your suggestion that we not run a module in every issue would probably result in a reader revolt. (Right readers?)

We already recycle tournaments on a regional basis, and we still need more. One consequence of doing things right is that the demand keeps increasing.

We have been running illustrations of a great variety of races: Elves, Dwarves, Gnomes, Orcs, et al. If you are suggesting that our artwork show a greater variety of humans, we'll try to remember to ask our artists to do so. ❑

The Living City
(Continued from page 24)

offers to sell it for 5 gp. If the party buys it and tries to resell it to a dealer, it is recognized and they are accused of trying to pull a fast one.

3. Spotting the group approaching, Angel hides in an alley and casts a *friends* spell. He then appears and begs — and receives — loans from those who failed their saving throws.

4. Angel cages a large lizard and uses a *change* cantrip to make it resemble a pseudo dragon (one turn duration). He then uses a *polymorph self* spell to appear as a fat old merchant, and approaches a PC magic-user, offering to sell the "pseudo dragon" for 100 gp or a potion. If the deal is taken, Angel quickly makes his getaway before the creature changes back to a lizard.

5. From a nice dark alleyway, Angel chooses a PC and unloads up to four *charm person* spells from maximum range. He then *polymorphs* into an elderly, white-haired man and approaches the PC, calling out as though they are old friends, and asks for the repayment of 20 gp he "loaned" him/her a long time ago (and getting it if the PC failed any of the saves).

6. Angel polymorphs into a dwarf, approaches a PC; then casts a *distract* cantrip which, if successful, adds 5% to his imminent *pick pocket* attempt. If he fails, he tries to flee, polymorphing into a bird and flying away if necessary.

Note that Angel's best defenses are his many disguises. With his *polymorph self* spell and cantrips, he is a veritable chameleon, making later identification of him impossible. The *polymorph* also provides a good means of escape (flying away as a bird, etc.). Angel's last resort if cornered is his *rod of beguiling.* ❑

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PLAN 4:	$25	Basic 1 year membership, sent to an overseas address by Surface Mail.
PLAN 5:	$45	Basic 1 year membership, sent to an overseas address by Air Mail.
RENEWAL:	$12	Sent to a U.S. address only.

I want to join!

Rush me my membership kit now! I have checked below the type of membership I desire, as well as how I am paying my dues.

☐ **NEW MEMBERSHIP** ☐ **RENEWAL of #** _____ ☐ **RE-OPEN EXPIRED MEMBERSHIP #** _____

Check type of membership: ☐ PLAN 1 ☐ PLAN 2 ☐ PLAN 3 ☐ PLAN 4 ☐ PLAN 5 ☐ Renewal

Check to indicate choice of payment: ***(Please type or print clearly in ink.)***

☐ Check (Payable to: "RPGA Network" in the amount of $ _____)
☐ Money-order (Payable to: "RPGA Network" in the amount of $ _____)
☐ Credit Card (please complete box below)

Credit Card # _____ Exp. Date _____
☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard
Signature _____ Today's Date _____

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State/Prov. _____
Country _____ Postal Code _____
Day: Area Code _____ Phone _____
Evening: Area Code _____ Phone _____
Year of Birth _____

All payments must be in U.S. Funds. Offers and dues subject to change without notice. Your membership kit will arrive in 6 to 8 weeks. Watch for it!

Please list your favorite games and note whether you are a player or game master for each system:

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Mail to: RPGA™ Network, P.O. Box 97809, Chicago, IL 60678-7809

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